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YELLOWSTONE JACK; OR, The Trappers of the Enchanted Ground.

BY JOSEPH E. BADGER, JR.,
Author of "Old Bull's-eye, the Lightning Shot of the Plains."

CHAPTER I. THE POUDEREE.

"It's no use—in less'n three shakes we'll ketch it, hot an' heavy!"

"But, Harris, we must reach the shelter of the rocks. Look yonder—'tis a hurricane! It will be death to meet it here, unprotected. Look beyond the point—see! the trees uprooted, the very rocks carried like feathers before the blast! On—whip up there—it's life or death now, boys!"

"Mules is poor critters to buck ag'inst the wind in a race, boss—but hev it so, though I 'vise ye to turn the critters head in, like a corral, sorter. That'll be the devil an' all to pay when the animiles feel the fust lick—they'll stampede, shore!"

"Too late—we haven't time—our only chance is the rocks yonder. Maynard—look to the democrat—push on ahead and save the girls—quick!"

With hoarse shouts, angry curses and imprecations, mingled with and given force by the stinging "blacksnake," the sharp crack of which echoed from side to side of Shichachetish* pass, the teamsters urged on their snorting, terrified mules, pausing not to pick the smoothest way, but bouncing recklessly over the bowlders that thickly strewed the level bottom, often threatening to overturn the unwieldy wagon, thinking only of gaining the haven of safety beneath the overhanging cliff beyond the mouth of the pass.

Of the six vehicles, five were huge, clumsy, deep-bedded wagons—true "prairie schooners"—heavily loaded, drawn each by six stout mules. Their drivers, each bestriding his "near-wheeler," plied tongue, spurs and whip without cessation. Other men ran alongside, flogging the bewildered animals, pricking them with knives until their sides and haunches were washed with blood.

The sixth vehicle—that which the "boss" had called a "democrat"—was a light, four-wheeled spring wagon, with oil-cloth cover, drawn by two stylish horses. The driver, a fiery-crested little fellow, evidently had his hands full, though manfully struggling to bring the maddened animals under wretched control. The unusual noise and confusion had so alarmed them that the utmost endeavors of Terrence McCarthy only served to keep their heads directed toward the overhanging cliff beyond. The light vehicle bounded over the rough bowlders, swaying frightfully, and the hard-mouthing animals threatened to draw Terrence over the low da-hoards.

Shicha-chetish pass or canon, as it might almost as well be termed, closely resembles a gigantic letter Y, with its base pointing nearly due west. Upon either hand, divided by nearly one hundred feet of chalky soil, thickly strewed with bowlders of various sizes and shapes that had fallen from the sides of the pass, rose abruptly the walls of the canon, in a series of gigantic steps or plateaus. The first and largest step was considerably over a hundred feet in height, clear-cut and perpendicular, so smooth and regular that a cat could not have scaled it, unless aided by the scanty, straggling growth of parasitic plants that clung to the face of the chalky rock. Above this rose another and another step, until the top, where a dense growth of scrubby pines, cedars and pinons crowned the ridge. The base of the Y is some two miles in length; the arms, a trifle longer. The lower branch—or the one tending to the north-west—was the one along which the emigrants had wound.

An hour previously, the day had been all that is expected of latter June; clear, warm, and inspiring. But there came a sudden change. The sky darkened, the sunshine assumed a blood-red tinge, the air suddenly died away to almost suffocating stillness. Men and cattle felt oppressed. They breathed with difficulty. They felt as though scorched. And yet their skins were dry and parched. The searing atmosphere prevented perspiration. Instead of being among the mountains, where their yearning gaze could even then rest upon masses of cooling snow, they seemed to be in the midst of a desert, beneath the scorching sun's withering breath.

Bob Harris, an old trapper who had been picked up by the way, wounded, almost starved, though he had managed to escape with his scalp from the Blackfeet who had robbed him of animals, traps and peltries, told John Warren that he believed a storm—the terrible poudeere—was brewing. The guide, Chris Camp,

* Literally, "Bad Wolf," though why so called, I do not know.

+ I spell this as it is pronounced; whether correctly or not, I do not know.



"We've struck a fat streak in hyar. A pelt a trap fer a week runnin' ain't to be sneezed at."

scoffed at this idea. A snow-storm in summer—bah!

"Body but a fool—or wuss—d' want us to camp hyar, whar the reds of be they're nigh to han', ked bag us easy's fallin' off a log. They ked crawl up 'thin forty foot o' us, unsee—an' squash us like tum-le-bugs under a wagon-wheel by rollin' rocks down on us from up thar. You say you're a friid, old man—talk more like one o' them cussed white Injuns!"

Warren checked the quarrel that threatened to end in bloodshed, by swearing he would shoot the man who first struck a blow, and then the train slowly moved on. It was but natural that Camp should be believed before Harris, since he had been with the train from Council Bluffs, while the other was a stranger.

But as the party entered the main portion of the pass, the sky grew more and more threatening. The oppressive heat subsided.

Instead, came an icy-cold current that chilled man and beast to the bone. The fitful gusts increased in power and frequency, striking the emigrants fairly in the face, almost carrying them from their feet. The sun was hidden behind leaden clouds. Far away, just above the western horizon, could be seen a black cloud, rapidly increasing in size. Still Camp declared that they could reach the mouth of the pass in time. Upon the open ground, even if they had not time to reach secure shelter, they would be safer than in the narrow canon where the hurricanes would be doubled in its force by the high walls.

The cloud advanced with frightful rapidity. Then came a dull, rumbling noise that resembled the thunders of a distant cataract, ever and anon breaking into prolonged echoes like the roll of thunder. The whirling gusts of wind blended into one steady blast, cold as the breath of an iceberg, seeming to pierce the very marrow—to cut the sensitive flesh like a keen knife. Footmen were prostrated—horses and mules staggered back—the canvas tilts of the wagons were torn into shreds.

Then came an abrupt lull. This blast was but the *avant courier* of the hurricane—of the poudeere. And in this interval were spoken the words that head this chapter.

The mouth of the pass was now in full view, scarce a quarter of a mile distant. Through it could be distinguished the abrupt spur of another mountain ridge, rising almost perpendicularly from the level. Under lee of this cliff the emigrants would be comparatively well sheltered from the storm. But could they gain the haven in time? Calm reason would have answered not.

The first force of the poudeere struck the projecting mass of verdure-clad rock. The deep, sultry warning of the hurricane abruptly changed its note—instead there now came the sharp, electric reverberations of a prolonged roll of musketry. The stiff, stubborn trees upon the mountain side were lashed furiously to and fro, then either broken short off or else torn up by the roots and carried far from their birthplace upon the mighty breath of the storm demon, and strewed thickly over the plain.

Huge bowlders were wrested from their reposes and sent thundering adown the sloping mountain side and hurled bodily over the precipice. Clouds of dust, leaves and broken branches filled the air, as though seeking to hide this dread desolation from the eyes of man.

But then the cloud deepened—the mountain spur faded from view—the vail was no longer of dust. It was of snow, of sleet and ragged hailstones.

A moment later, and the poudeere, swallowing up the emigrants. Its effects, though instantaneous, must be described in detail.

Frank Maynard, the young man whom John Warren had bade look to the safety of those occupying the "democrat," was a little in advance, mounted upon a stout horse. The blast struck him, crushing both horse and rider to the earth with as little resistance as a blade of grass gives to the foot that rests upon it!

The occupants of the democrat were prostrated upon the seats, and the wind burst the stout oilskin curtains from their fastenings. The one upon the left side gave way first, and to this fact is probably owed what followed. Instead of being upset, the wagon was lifted up and whirled half-way around, so that it pressed firmly against the rock wall of the pass. The horses were thrown from their feet at the same moment, and half-rolled, half-dragged over and over, until their heads were pointing in the direction of the back trail.

The foremost wagon was served even worse. The mules, staggering beneath the first shock, whirled abruptly to the right, "cramping" the wagon as it turned broadside to the hurricane, lifting a wheel clear off the ground. And thus the huge mass was prostrated.

Even above the roar of the tornado, the crashing of wood, there arose a shriek of horrible agony. Somebody—at least one human being had been stricken down by the falling wagon.

Mules, horses and cattle were overthrown. Men were carried from their feet and then dashed violently to the ground or against the jagged bowlders, a score yards away. Fragments of rock began to thunder down the se-

ries of gigantic steps, loosened by the resistless breath of the poudeere, threatening the unfortunate emigrants with a new peril.

Snow and sleet and hailstones—the latter rough and ragged, as though composed of several smaller ones, frozen together as they came in contact, forming masses of ice large as a man's clenched fist*—were driven with frightful force. Death seemed inevitable.

Fortunate indeed was it that these masses of ice were only carried upon the front of the train. A single moment—then there came a brief lull; the lull before the tornado.

Yet in that single moment the bewildered horses that were attached to the democrat struggled to their feet, bruised and bleeding, half-mad. The sudden start dragged Terrence McCarthy forcibly from the seat upon which he was lying, even in that dire confusion tightly clutching the reins. He was hurled headlong beneath the fore wheels.

Then the fierce wind again howled through the pass, with renewed vigor. It struck the democrat, forcing the light vehicle against the trembling animals' haunches. With a mad scream in unison, they bounded forward, by what seemed a miracle, passing over the struggling pile of mules attached to the overturned wagon, and then disappeared in the blinding storm.

Only one human eye had seen them dash by. Frank Maynard had been hurled from the saddle, and thus escaped being crushed beneath his falling horse. He managed to scramble to his feet during the momentary lull. It was more than the love of life that inspired him. He was thinking of others—or rather of another—of Minnie Warren.

With a desperate wrench he half-lifted his confused animal erect, and leaped into the saddle as he saw the democrat and its priceless freight dash past him. And then, as the renewed blast struck him, he plunged his spurs more deep into his horse's flanks, and darted forward to rescue his loved one, or to share her fate.

All this transpired with the rapidity of thought. Scarce ten seconds had elapsed from the first striking of the poudeere till the strange chase was hidden in the storm-cloud of snow and hail, of twisted boughs and shattered rock.

It was a wild, reckless chase—one that no party was caught in a similar hailstorm while traveling over the Kansas prairies. We saved ourselves by crossing the trail, then half-turned, and dashed back to the democrat. A man and his horse were killed by the hailstones. A man and his horse were found dead; his skull was fractured. After the storm, we picked up hailstones larger than a man's clenched fist.

—AUTHOR.

really sane man could have attempted with any hopes of success. Yet Maynard never once gave thought to his own danger. He only knew that his more than life was threatened with death, and he plied spurs and bridle reins, hoarsely shouting to his horse, that, mad with terror and urged on by the bitter, terrible storm, plunged blindly forward, stumbling over bowlders and limbs of trees, slipping upon the hailstones, yet, through some strange providence, keeping its feet. Surely 'twas neither its own activity nor the skill of its rider that avoided a fall, where to fall, at such a pace, would be death.

Yet a gleam of reason returned to Maynard in time to prevent a fatal error. As they neared the spot where the arms of the Y merged into the main stem, the horse naturally hugged the right hand wall; for that was the course he had followed in coming—he was upon the back track. Maynard glanced down. He saw that the tracks left by the democrat in the snow and hailstones bore to the left. Though so rapidly filling up, there could be no doubt of this. And he wrenches his animal's head around toward the upper pass. The horse stumbled and fell to its knees. But the taut reins lifted him forcibly, and the next moment he plunged into the unknown pass.

Whither did it lead? What would be the ending of this mad, reckless chase?

The pass was very much like the one already described, excepting that it was on a smaller scale. The width of level ground between the towering bluffs or plateaus, was barely fifty feet, and fully one-half of this was barred and choked up by the fragments of soft rock that had fallen from the cliffs. Yet, through this narrow passage the maddened horses had evidently carried the light spring wagon with its precious freight, for now, despite the driving snowstorm, Maynard could plainly distinguish the trail—he even fancied he could hear the thunder of iron-shod hoofs before him through the deafening clamor of the raging tornado. And with hopes reviving in his bosom he urged on his terrified animal, mercilessly applying spur and reins.

He did not feel the icy breath of the poudeere, though it was fast stiffening his every limb. He had thought only of his loved one and her peril.

He leaned impatiently forward and sought to pierce the cloud of whirling snow. He could not fairly distinguish the towering cliffs that were upon either hand. In front there seemed nothing but driving snow and clattering hailstones.

Then came a sudden change. Though the force of the wind seemed to increase, if anything, the hail ceased and the snowflakes became fewer. The vanguard of the poudeere had outstripped the leaden-footed mortals.

A hoarse, inarticulate cry broke from Maynard's lips. He could now distinguish the sleek-coated wagon. The terrified horses were still fleeing at top speed, aided, rather than retarded, by the democrat. At times a fierce gust of wind would hurl the vehicle fairly against their haunches. They could not have paused in their mad career, while the tornado urged them on, and keep their feet. To fall would be almost certain destruction.

In vain Maynard urged on his horse. He could not overtake them. And the clatter of iron-shod hoofs behind them still further excited the runaways.

The back curtains were driven in by the force of the wind. Maynard could just distinguish the light drapery of a woman. It was the dress worn by Ada Dixon.

Minnie—where was she? He could see nothing but driving snow and clattering hailstones.

A groan of heartrending agony burst from Maynard's lips as this thought struck him. A vision of her mangled body lying among the cruel, jagged bowlders danced before his eyes. It seemed so real, that he reeled in his saddle—the rein dropped from his benumbed hand—and as his horse stumbled, the young man was cast forward upon the animal's neck.

Mechanically clutching the thick mane, Maynard slipped back in the saddle as his horse arose. And then the mad race swept on.

"Help! for the love of God! Frank, save—"

The words came indistinctly to his ear, and he saw Ada slightly lift her head; but then a severe jolt again cast her beneath the seat.

The appeal thoroughly aroused Maynard. He saw that at least one life depended upon his exertions. With a cry of encouragement he urged his horse on.

A ray of hope flashed upon him. He saw that the pass ended only a few hundred yards

ahead. He could distinguish a low line of something dark—it must be bushes, growing upon the open ground beyond.

Then a fierce blast of wind drives the snow-cloud aside. A cry of horror bursts from his lips. He draws his knife and mercilessly pricks his horse. Death—a horrible death yawns before the runaways and their helpless freight. The bushes are tree-tops, whose trunks are hidden from view! They grow in a ravine, or upon the side of a fathomless canyon. And the terror-blinded animals plunge furiously toward it!

He thrusts his knife deep into his horse's hip, and leaves it ranking in the wound as he draws his revolver. The horse shrieks with pain, but he can do no more, where he is already ready doing his best.

The hammer falls. The cap explodes—but no report follows.

And the mad animals plunge on to their death!

CHAPTER II.

"BIRDS OF A FEATHER."

"THE dogs are beginning to growl, are they? Let them dare show their teeth to me, and the devil will have a feast before his time! Chief I am and chief I will be; enough for them that I lead the way."

These words were uttered *sotto voce* by a man who stood leaning carelessly against the trunk of a cottonwood tree, his dark eyes roving over the scene before him, one hand instinctively caressing the polished butt of a revolver.

There was nothing remarkable about this personage, if his eyes be excepted. They were large, unusually brilliant, of a jetty blackness. At times languid, sleepy, they could fill with a mesmeric fire powerful enough to subdue the rising passions of a hungry wild beast; at such times the twin orbs seemed to pierce one through and through, to read one's inmost thoughts, to aye the most reckless spirit into mute submission.

He was neither handsome nor ugly, in face; of medium size, though rather broad-shouldered. His frame was one that would not attract a second glance in a crowd, yet a connoisseur would have declared this man possessed of extraordinary strength and activity.

Before him, stretched at ease upon the green sward in the shade cast by the group of young cottonwoods, were nearly a score of men. Their coarse, obscene language, their masks of shaggy, ill-kempt hair and beard more than their color or dress, proclaimed these men of Anglo-Saxon lineage. Their garb partook more of the savage—only no Indian could curse and blaspheme so fluently.

One of them, a squat, red-haired Caliban, seemed especially discontented, and his voice was louder than he probably intended, as he uttered the words:

"I say it's too darned thin! What'd he promise us? Money, horses, mules, goods—lots of it. Whar is it? Jest whar it war af' we started. Whose fault is it? Our'n! Not much! It's his. We hed the chancie las' night—we hev the chancie now; why don't he let us bounce 'em! Mebbe he wants the redskins to git in a head o' us. Who is he, anyhow? Kin anybody?"

"Cheese it, Firetop—look yender!" hastily muttered one of the discontented villain's comrades, fairly turning a dirty gray, as he quickly rolled away from the spot.

Firetop glanced up, and then his brilliant crest drooped. A revolver muzzle was staring him full in the face, held by the man who still leaned carelessly against the tree-trunk. The magnetic black eye shone like a coal of fire above the polished tube, and held the gaze of the discontent, surely as the diamond orbs of a rattlesnake enchain the fluttering bird.

"I can tell you, Sandy Ben—your master, dog! Stand up—fool! d'y' think I'll give ye time to draw that pistol? Hold up your hands—I'll not warn ye twice. There—now ask me your questions. What is it you were growling about?"

The squat ruffian sullenly rose erect and held up his unarmed hands as ordered, though it was evident he would gladly have rebelled, had he seen one chance of doing so, successfully. But the silver drop covered his brain, and he knew that any such attempt would be rewarded with a half-ounce of lead.

"Speak up, man—what were you growling about?"

"If you heerd me at all, you know well enough," sullenly.

"No impudence—I've asked you twice. The third time 'twill be through my revolver," quietly added the chief.

"If you're spilin' to shoot, why don't ye blaze away? 'Twon't be the first time at I've smelted burnt powder."

"This will be the last time, if you don't!"

"Injuns! look out, Cap—ahind ye, that!" suddenly yelled Sandy Ben, leaping quickly aside.

The leader of this rough band involuntarily turned his head, to glance behind him. And a revolver-bullet grazed his cheek, severing a lock of the silken whiskers in its passage.

Quick as though the half-dropped pistol was leveled, and a second report followed the first like an echo. Without a groan, Sandy Ben wheeled half around, throwing up his arms, the still smoking revolver dropping from his nerveless grasp; then he fell forward upon his face, dead, shot through the brain.

The chief was still leaning against the trunk, nor did he move as the men simultaneously sprung to their feet with drawn weapons, other than to lift the hammer of his revolver. His face was calm and composed, though his eyes seemed to emit a phosphorescent gleam, as he spoke.

"A shot for a shot—tis true prairie law. But if any one of you object, I will be happy to accommodate you."

"The boss is right, boys," said a tall, gaunt specimen of humanity. "Sandy Ben pulled fast—an' sense the durned greeny couldn't shoot no better'n that, why he'd arter kick the bucket. Miss the size of a man at fifteen yards—git out!"

This characteristic speech turned the tide in the captain's favor, and the threatened mutiny died out. The slayer of Sandy Ben now appeared an entirely different person. He was as cordial and affable as he had been stern and haughty.

"Thank you, my lads—we'll get on finely, now. Sandy Ben was the only fool among you—he thought he could *drive* me, by hot words. But enough of him—roll the carion into the creek—then listen. I will tell you, now, just what my plans are. I intended doing so, all along, but he would have said that fear of *him* made me."

"You know this much, that my name is Mat Mole, that I hired you at fifty dollars per month, to do a job of work for me. You know that this job is connected with the emigrant train ahead of us, but nothing more. As the hour for winding up the job is now at hand, I'll tell you my whole plans."

"You know that John Warren is boss of this train. He is my enemy. The man that

shows me his scalp, I will pay double wages, when we return to Council Bluffs. Silence! wait until I am done."

"There are two women with the train—Warren's daughter and niece. His daughter—the brown-haired one—must be mine, unharmed. The other you can dispose of—by drawing lots, or by cards, just as you choose."

"Warren is bound for the coast of California, where he expects to make a fortune in the hide and tallow trade. His brother wrote him to come—he had made nearly a million in five years. Warren sold out, and is taking his money along to buy land and cattle. He has over two thousand dollars in gold with him. This sum you can divide between you, I ask nothing, only that you help me in getting his daughter."

The men cheered loudly at this intelligence. At that moment they would have charged death itself, had Mat Mole desired them.

"You have wondered why I did not strike at once—why I have delayed so long, and thrown away so many fair opportunities. Well, I am a man that likes to make all sure, before I show my hand. Not one of this party must escape with their lives. They are nearly double our force. Even if we had surprised them, as we might have done a score of times, there would have been a tough fight, and some of them might have got away. Now, if they escape us, the Indians will pick them up before they can reach safety."

"What's to hinder the varmints from picking us up, as well?" asked Tobin, the tall, gaunt man.

"We are in the Blackfoot country, and I can do with them whatever I will. They will not oppose us. Besides, we have a friend with these emigrants. Their guide is in my pay. You see how far they have wandered from the right trail. Well, we have Chris Camp to thank for that. You know the trouble I have taken to lay false 'sign' around their camps. Chris read that as I bade him. Under the pretense of giving the Blackfeet the slip, he has led them into the very heart of the Blackfoot country. This night, if everything works well, we will finish our job and—"

A low, peculiar whistle echoed from down the shallow stream, interrupting Mat Mole in his speech. The men seemed to recognize the signal, but when it was repeated, with a different cadence, each man sprung for his rifle. Even Mole appeared startled.

The next moment a tall, lithe figure glided into view, and approached Mat Mole.

"What is it, Vern?" asked the leader, sharply.

"Indians—two-score—trailing us," was the quick reply.

"Of what tribe?"

"Blackfeet, I think. They were too close for me to lose any time. They are painted for the war-path."

"Then it's all right. Boys, I see you forgot what I told you. These Blackfeet will be our allies, not enemies, if we will share with them. They need not know anything about the gold—you can afford to let them have the mules. But *catch* yourselves, and wait. Watch me close. Agree to everything I say, and all will be well."

"We can whip them, captain," muttered the scout.

"No need. Don't you see we can make these fools play cat to our monkey? They may burn their fingers, but they will do our work and save us much trouble and some few lives. But there—I must go meet them."

Mat Mole glided down the creek, quickly disappearing amid the undergrowth. His men promptly *cached* themselves, their weapons in readiness for use in case their leader's confidence should be misplaced.

The scout alone appeared dissatisfied. He would rather have met the Blackfeet as enemies than on a friendly footing. And when it is said that his father's scalp hung in the smoke of a Blackfoot lodge, the sentiment is not strange.

Vernon Campbell was a character, in his way. Ten years before—when he was barely fifteen—his last relative had been killed, and he taken prisoner by the Blackfeet. Six months later he managed to escape, by killing his adopted father and brother, stealing a couple of horses, and reached the settlements in safety, though pursued for two days and nights. Since then he had devoted his life to hunting Indians. Young as he was, his deeds were well known among the Blackfeet, and his name was a terror to them. He had joined Mole, on learning they were bound for the Blackfoot country, without asking the object of their journey. Nor would he have cared much, since, as may be supposed, his conscience had been slightly exercised during the past years.

He was tall, lithe, straight as an Indian, an adept in all athletic sports, a perfect master of his weapons, and one of the surest trailers in the West. His features were regular, almost classic in their outline. His fair hair hung in slightly-curled locks, below his shoulders. His face was perfectly smooth. Like the Indian, he assiduously plucked all superfluous hair from his face. His garb was plain, formed wholly of Indian-dressed buckskin, neither fringed nor ornamented. A round, tight-fitting skull cap of buckskin covered his head. His eyes needed no protection. If need be, he could gaze at the noonday sun without dimming their luster.

Mat Mole glided rapidly down the creek bank, using considerable caution, but more as from force of habit than because he apprehended danger. And yet he was almost within hearing of a Blackfoot war-party—those most invertebrate enemies of the white sex.

He paused upon the edge of the undergrowth. Before him lay full half a mile of valley that was perfectly free of trees or bushes, the ground covered with naught save a short, close-curled grass. Up this valley the pale-faced Indians were bound.

"Their trailers will not be far in advance," muttered Mole. "They won't dream we are so near, as the trail is full fifteen hours old. I don't think there'll be any trouble, though 'tis ten years and more since I left them."

A few moments later Mat Mole saw two footmen enter the open ground, gliding rapidly forward, their heads bowed like hounds running by scent. Before these trailers had passed over half the space, a strong body of horsemen followed upon their track. Mole gazed keenly at them, but the bright rays of the sun glinting across the freshly-painted and oiled faces, baffled him. He could only tell that this was indeed a Blackfoot war-party.

Placing a hand to his mouth, Mat Mole pealed forth the shrill, unearthly war-whoop of the Kainna Blackfeet. It was heard distinctly, and the savage riders instantly drew rein, glaring toward the timber in surprise. Then came a long-drawn, peculiar yell, dying away in a quavering wail; a yell that has chilled many a bold heart—for it was a startling imitation of the panther's cry. It was Mat Mole's "totem."

The Blackfeet seemed to recognize the yell, and as the white man boldly emerged from the brush a gayly bedizened chief galloped forward

to meet him. A slight exclamation of joy broke from Mole's lips, for he knew that all was well. He recognized in the chief an old time friend and comrade, Neepaughwheese, or the "Night-Walker."

The meeting was cordial upon both sides, and quite a long conversation ensued, but which need not be detailed upon the reader in all its details.

The Blackfeet were glad to learn that Creeping Panther was still living, though they had heard he had long since been dispatched to the happy hunting-grounds by a white snake, who, fearing to meet the eye of a brave, crept up and struck him from behind.

On the other hand, Creeping Panther had not forgotten his red brethren, but had brought them a band of stout braves, whose heads were red, though their skins were pale, to help fight their battles. And, too, he had driven before him a rich wagon-train filled with goods, and attended by plenty of good scalps, to prove that he had not forgotten his red friends.

He had kept the hatchets of the Atoes and Sioux away from them, that the Blackfeet might not be robbed of their prize.

The Blackfeet were to have the horses, the mules, the goods and wagons, all except two poor squaws that he had said must help fill his lodge with braves and chiefs to lead the noble Blackfeet upon the war-path.

This speech was most graciously received. The Night-Walker, on behalf of his braves, pledged himself to greet Creeping Panther's warriors as brothers, and together they would despoil the wagon-train. And with this understanding the party hastened on up the creek.

Nearing camp, Mole gave the signal that all was well, and a minute later the allies were grouped together on the most amicable footing. All except Vernon Campbell. He stood apart, sulky and discontented, his weapons ready for use in case he should be recognized. But he had changed greatly since his captivity, and not one of the Blackfeet suspected this young stripling of being that dreaded scourge of their race, Pacanne-puck-on-che-luk, or the "Man that drinks blood."

Evidently Mat Mole distrusted the self-control of Vernon, for he bade him set forth and dog the emigrants to their night-camp. As though glad to put temptation behind him, Campbell left the camp.

Mole and the Night-Walker, after some further grandiloquent speeches, quickly arranged their plans for the capture of the train, Mole translating the agreement for his followers' benefit.

In most respects it corresponded with what the leader had already told his men, only that now the Blackfeet were to do most of the work, which was but natural, since they were to have the largest share of the plunder, if not the most valuable.

The council was abruptly broken up by the storm, that had long been brewing. Warned by the weatherwise Indians, the adventurers took their horses down the valley to the open ground, and then threw them, securely tying their legs. Shrouded in their blankets, the men crouched down behind their animals' bodies, and awaited the *poudreux*.

It came in all its fury—the wind, the sleet, the snow, the hail—not even Night-Walker had ever witnessed such a terrible storm. It seemed as though the end of the world had come.

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CHAPTER III.

THE SPIRIT OF THE ENCHANTED VALLEY.

"WAGH!"

"What is 't, boyee?"

"Sign—Blackfoot, I reckon."

"Two sizes—toss p'nted up, to'rds our cache—no back trail. A blind man could read it, boyee. These imps may not hev come hyer lookin' for us in pretickilar, but they must a' seen our sign up the valley, 'less they're plum blind. What then? Why they'll puck a'chee after help to come back an' raise our pants."

"I reckon we'd better puckachee,* then," suggested one.

"An' I reckon no. We've struck a fat streak in hyar. A pelt a trap for a week runnin' ain't to be sneezed at. Then shell we puckachee jist becaus we run on a couple o' injun huff-marks in the sand? I reckon you're jist a coddin', Brindle Joe."

"Jist es you say, Yallerstone—don't matter to me."

"Waal, hunker down hyar; the varmints mought sight us afore we got a good ready. Now lis'en. You fellers said you'd let me choose our trail on this trip. You see'd that I didn't lie to ye 'bout the fur hyar. You know that's plenty more 'round. Now, shell we stick it out a little longer, or shell we go an' tell the brigade of our find? Ef they come, our sheer'll be smaller, but we'll be strong enough then to laugh at the hull Blackfoot tribe. What shell we do?"

"Do jist es you say, old man," promptly replied Brindle Joe.

"I known it—I known you was true grit, clear to the backbone! Ef your 'a' said def'runt, Brindle Joe, I'd 'a' bin dis'a'nted in my oard. But thar—I reckon we've got other work than to gass all day. Joe, you an' Mexy come wi' me. Hoosier, you an' Heely! Hank cache wi' hyar, an' a red comes down this away, 'less 'n'ithout burnin' powder, ef posseble, but save 'n' ide."

Yellowstone Jack and his comrades glided rapidly but stealthily up the valley, leaving their two friends in ambush behind them.

These men, with one other, who had been found, arrow-pierced and scalps, upon his "run," three days before, had joined the brigade under command of the veteran, "Old Jim Bridger," for the "spring hunt." Yellowstone Jack, a "prime hand," despite his youth, had gained leave to take a few comrades with him to visit a secret preserve of his own. Bridger granted this request the more readily that he knew the Indians, into whose country they had penetrated, were most likely fully engaged with their hunting further south-east. Until this "meat-making" was completed, they would have little time for aught else.

The little party met with extraordinary success. Scarce a trap was set that did not nightly contain a beaver or an otter. And though spring furs, being lighter, are less in price than the winter pelts, the adventurers were in high glee as they calculated the profits of the trip. How many pleasures—what glorious drunks—the intoxicating smiles of women—how many nights of delirious gaming could be had with their earnings!

Yet all was not serene. There was some thing about them that they could not understand. During the past two weeks they had caught occasional glimpses of a woman—of what appeared to be a marvelously beautiful and graceful girl. But could a human being appear and vanish so abruptly, so mysterious? Was it not—and those bold hearts, who would have faced scores of bloodthirsty enemies?

Placing a hand to his mouth, Mat Mole pealed forth the shrill, unearthly war-whoop of the Kainna Blackfeet. It was heard distinctly, and the savage riders instantly drew rein, glaring toward the timber in surprise. Then came a long-drawn, peculiar yell, dying away in a quavering wail; a yell that has chilled many a

shipmates perish while I have a sound deck beneath my feet."

"Mr. Moncrief, your heart is in the right place, sir; I will stand ready to obey your orders, even if in saving them we put our own necks in the hangman's noose," answered the brave sailor with firmness.

The brig could now be distinguished by the flash of her signal guns, to be a few cables length distant, rolling and pitching heavily in the sea, and coming down toward the schooner only a short distance to leeward.

Grasping firmly by the mainstays, Noel awaited until the wreck came near, and just as the roar of another gun died away, hailed in a loud, ringing voice:

"Ho! the brig, ahoy!"

No answer came for a moment, and then in the voice of Lieutenant Ainslie was the reply:

"Ahoy! who hails, and where away?"

"The chase; off your windward bow. Do you wish aid?"

A murmur of voices could be heard for an instant, and then Lieutenant Ainslie cried:

"We were struck by lightning; our masts are cut away, and we are leaking badly."

"My vessel is large enough to hold your crew; I'll hang off your quarter in case of need."

A moment there was silence, and as the brig was driving by, Noel said:

"She must bear sail, Stranger; raise the foremast-staysail."

With great difficulty the order was executed, and in a few moments the schooner was again driving before the gale, but with terrible risk, and soon overhauled the brig, when Noel again hailed:

"I will hang near you, in case of need."

"Who is that that hails?" suddenly cried the instant voice of Commodore Cutting.

"Noel Moncrief," boldly answered the young officer, and his words brought a ringing cheer from the crew of the brig.

"I knew it. No, Mr. Moncrief, we are in no immediate danger; our pumps will keep us afloat; and we can soon rig jury-masts."

"No, sir, if we could not take you by fair means we will not by foul; so stand on your course, young man, and if life is dear to you, keep clear of the United States."

A perfect yell of joy came from the seamen of the brig, all of whom sympathized with Noel, and admired his courage and the noble offer he had but just made to serve them, and again the commodore cried:

"Moncrief, it was noble of you to desire to serve us, and we thank you for it."

Again the clear and manly tones of Noel Moncrief were heard, and all remained silent to hear him, for the schooner was forging ahead, as he hailed.

"Commodore Cutting, I thank you for your kindness. One and all, shipmates, fare-well."

Three cheers were given by the brig's crew, even the officers joining in, and the gale somewhat abating, the mainsail of the schooner was raised, and at sunrise, as the Vulture, having rigged temporary masts, headed back toward Portsmouth, the little yacht, with its daring commander, was far to the southward, a mere speck upon the restless waters.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BUCCANEER BARGE.

ONE pleasant afternoon, some two months after the escape of the yacht, Dart, from Portsmouth harbor, a small, sharp-bowed craft, with two slender masts rigged with lateen sails, was sailing quietly along the shores of Cuba, for the scene of my story now changes, kind reader, from the rock-bound coast of the North to the waters of the sunny South.

The *carrera*, for such is the name given to craft of the kind mentioned above, appeared not to be, as are many of her class in the Indies, a swift sailer, for though she had all sail spread to catch the four-knot breeze that was blowing, she was not making anything more out of it than would many a vessel of even a less fair build.

At any rate, the *carrera* was a comfortable little craft of perhaps ten tons, and her deck cleanly kept and in perfect order, while her cabin was large, roomy, and almost luxuriously furnished, which at once discovered her to belong to some coast planter of wealth, and used by him as a pleasant means of conveyance to and from his estates, when his business called him to Havana or Matanzas.

Upon the deck of the *carrera* were visible nine persons, one of whom was a tall, stalwart man, dressed in white duck, and who appeared to be the commander, for he held the helm, and every now and then gave some order to four negroes forward, who formed the crew.

The helmsman was not a negro, though his face was very dark; but in his features and dark flashing eyes could be traced the blood of a descendant of that ancient tribe of Indians, the Escurians, who were the original possessors of the island which it has cost Spain so many human lives to hold.

Amidships stood two other persons, a young man and a young girl, both showing in their faces the admixture of the white with the African race, and their appearance indicating that they held the responsible positions of *valet* and *femme-de-chambre* to an old gentleman and a maiden who were seated aft, upon a low settee, apparently enjoying the beauty of the evening and the scenery along the coast, for the *carrera* was hardly a mile from the curving shores.

The old gentleman referred to was a person of striking appearance, for his face was darkly bronzed, his eyes intensely black and brilliant, while his mustache and curling hair were snow-white.

Dressed in a suit of white linen, with a broad *sombro* upon his head, Don Octavio Guido looked exactly what he was, a wealthy planter of Cuba, and one who, in his earlier years, evidently had seen military service in the field.

The maiden by his side, the Donna Violeta, was one of those dark types of beautiful women, peculiarly Spanish in face and form.

Her every motion was graceful, and her figure slight, molded with marvelous symmetry, and rather above the prescribed height for a perfect form, but still it appeared faultless in the close-fitting bodice and skirt of dark gray cloth.

The eyes were slumbering wells of fire, only needing a spark of love or anger to cause them to flash forth passion or brilliant flames; the face was in repose beautiful and Madonnalike, but as now and then it would light up as some pretty scene opened to her view shoreward, it was full of animation and sparkling loveliness; a face of health, perfect in mold, and strangely fascinating to one upon whom it was turned with kindness.

Upon her head, besides the rich dark vail that drooped upon her shapely shoulders, Señorita Violeta wore a broad sun-hat, that cast in shadow and half hid the braids of black hair, drawn back from the forehead and fastened in a circling mass with a gold comb.

So intently were all on board the craft engaged in watching the landscape panorama, as they gilded along, that they failed to observe a *drogher*, a kind of freight vessel used to carry coffee and sugar from the plantations to the city, that had suddenly come out of a lagoon, half hidden by the forests that overhung its mouth, and was standing boldly down upon them.

The *drogher* had two stump masts, upon which were hoisted by pulleys two long yards with large triangular sails, which, instead of reefing in a blow, could be lowered in an instant into the hold of the lugger, which was open, excepting a canvas covering stretched across and supported by a spar acting as a cross-beam.

But one man was visible upon the lugger, and he was at the helm, apparently endeavoring all he could to take advantage of the light wind to eat up to windward of the *carrera*.

For a while he was successful in his maneuver, and had nearly gained the wind of the smaller craft, when the quick eye of the helmsman of the *carrera* fell upon him, and, Lailul and the others, earnestly watched the movements of the brave little vessel.

After firing a second gun, which did considerable damage, as had the first shot, on board the *drogher*, the brave little schooner wore round, hauled her sheets in board and stood away in the wake of the *carrera*.

Rapidly the little schooner overhauled the *carrera*, and keeping in her wake and a point closer to windward, threatened to shave her as she passed by, and the Cuban planter and Lailul watched his strange movements, for they knew not yet what was the intention of the American.

Nearer and nearer the schooner approached, and, just as her sharp bowsprit hovered over the stern of the *carrera*, she fell off quickly, and, passing to leeward, her commander cried:

"*Carrera*, stop! Let go the halyards fore and aft! and away the *carrera* sped before the wind, to have her example followed the moment after by the *drogher*.

"This will never do, Lailul; for see, the lugger is now on her best sailing points."

The Indian glanced quickly over his own vessel, then steadily for a while at the pursuer, and at once gave the orders to the negro crew to trim in the sheets, while he put her away upon her former course, for with the wind on her quarter the *drogher* would also have to change, and it was evident she was not gaining as rapidly before them as after.

"No, Lailul, what do you believe that *drogher* to be?" and Don Octavio glanced anxiously toward his beautiful daughter, who, with pale face, was watching the approach of the strange vessel.

"*Senor*, I think the lugger is a pirate," answered the Indian, in a low tone.

"My God! I feared so. Lailul, we must not be taken," and the Cuban again glanced toward Violeta.

"No, *señor*, it is death anyway; so let us die with arms in our hands."

"Well said—Ha! yonder comes another sail!" and the Cuban pointed some two miles ahead, to where a small rakish-looking schooner was just rounding a point of land.

The helmsman seized a glass and gazed intently at the strange sail for a moment, and then said:

"She does not belong to these waters, but looks like an American-built vessel. If she was not so small I would believe her to be a buccaneer, also."

"Mary, mother of God, grant it be a friend! Here, one of you boys, lower our flag to half-mast and let him see we need his succor!" cried the Cuban.

The flag of Spain soon floated at half-mast, and all eyes were eagerly turned toward the schooner, to denote the slightest change in her course.

Soon it came; her bow swung round quickly, and, with the wind very nearly astern, she came flying down toward the *carrera*.

The *drogher* at once also presented a scene of action, for a dozen dark forms were discovered moving upon her decks, and quickly four long and heavy sweeps were put out, to endeavor to overhaul the chase ere the schooner he concluded, with a smile.

"It is not for me to criticize the action of the jury," said the judge, clearing his throat with a thunderous "ahem," "to pass sentence upon the prisoner. It, however, the prisoner has anything to say as to why sentence should not be passed he now has the opportunity."

The judge sat down, and Red Rob rose to his feet, and in that same calm, clear voice, said:

"Your honor, I have nothing to say why you should not fulfill your duty in this matter; but I am at a loss to know why the jury found the verdict they did, unless they had previously made up their minds, and the evidence failed to remove their prejudice. This, however, is only my opinion, and as I am somewhat interested in the matter, it is no more than natural, no doubt, that I should think so without offending the jury. But with the evidence of Raviso and Walbroke, I can't see how they arrived at the verdict they did. The first swore that I attacked the *casa* at eleven o'clock on a certain night, and an hour later, according to Walbroke's evidence, it was fifty miles north of there in the Conejos saloon, shooting down drunkards and gamblers, Walbroke says; and then in the same breath, almost swore that a free fight was going on when I called my men in, and that the dead had all been 'stabbed' to death. Now, why is this thus, your honor?"

He concluded, with a smile.

"It is not for me to criticize the action of the jury," said the judge. "I have only to act upon their verdict, as they acted upon the evidence; and it gives me pain to have this duty to discharge. You are but a boy in years, possessed of more than ordinary personal appearance, courage and executive ability, all of which you could have turned to a better purpose than you have. You have conducted yourself during this trial in a manner which I cannot think comes of bravado, nor the self-assurance of acquittal. There is that in your countenance which is open and manly, and calculated to command sympathy and admiration. These natural gifts of nature never should have been perverted as they have been. They never should have been tarnished with crime, for to be a robber, as you have been, is to be a murderer. The penalty must cover both. A band of organized robbers cannot carry on their nefarious business without taking life, although they may have no desire to shed innocent blood. The power of a robber-chief over his men is absolute, so he must be responsible for all that the band does in violation of the laws of the land. It therefore becomes my solemn duty to pronounce upon you the sentence of death. The coming evening at sunset you will suffer the penalty of your crimes by being shot, and may God have mercy upon your soul."

A silence that was broken only by the rustle of the swaying pinons succeeded this awful sentence. Yet there was a wild tumult within every breast, which finally burst forth in a general murmur. The crowd surged to and fro. Many were the exclamations of joy over the fate of the young robber, and many were expressions of sympathy.

Red Rob was now bound, for fear he would endeavor to avert his doom by escape. A strong guard was then placed over him. The youth still conducted himself with that calm resignation which had marked his conduct from the moment of his capture.

His men seemed little disturbed in mind by the coming fate so near at hand, for they continued to play cards, smoke their pipes and "spin their yarns."

As Sheridan and Albert St. Kenelm held a long conversation after the trial had ended, Dakota Dan had recommended the major to Sheridan, who embraced the earliest opportunity to make known the object that was nearest his heart—the rescue of the lovely Zella.

There was something about St. Kenelm that at once drew him into Sheridan's entire confidence and respect. In his tall figure, his clear, bright eye and open, manly countenance, the child he had not seen for long years, "Albert," he continued, "your face is the same it was at sixteen, with the exception that it has grown more manly. I can see your dear mother's eyes and hear her voice in yours. And if I only had my other child, my Octavia, then would I be Aaron St. Kenelm again. I may yet find her, Albert, though God only knows in what condition. I have, after years

of trailing, found the devil that stole her away and left his child—the one you have known as Octavia St. Kenelm. He is leader of those outlaws, the Phantom Aztecs. Ah, what a mockery! what an inhuman farce that was, Asa! I recognized the villain almost the moment that I set my eyes upon him. But I said nothing—pretended ignorance of the starting fact. Yes, that villain and outlaw is Leopold Hamallado, the fiend who stole my child. He may have her yet, or know where she is, and if so, I will find her, God willing."

"She is there, Basil, without a doubt," exclaimed Asa Sheridan. "I know it now—she is there in the ruins, noble, beautiful girl. She is called Zella. She liberated me and nursed and cared for me while I lay wounded in a mountain grotto not far from the ruins."

"God is merciful after all," murmured the old man. "I had begun to think that He had deserted me—that my prayers were in vain; but I know better now. It must be my child you see, Asa—your sister, Albert—my Octavia."

"She had soft, blue eyes; fair complexion, light golden hair," said Sheridan, "and a form of queenly beauty and grace, and a soul—"

"'Tis she—my Octavia!" cried the old man.

"There is no doubt of it, Basil," continued Sheridan. "She sent me a book to read while I lay convalescing in the mountain grotto. In that book was a letter just written, although Zella knew it not. It was a cold, fiendish letter, if I may say so, written to 'My dear Aaron.' The writer spoke of a child that he had stolen—of another that he had left. He spoke of that child having grown to womanhood and that she was the image of Estelle, her mother, and—"

"That's enough, Asa, my dear young friend," broke in the old man, "enough to convince me that it is my child; but go on again. Tell me something more of my child—assure me it is no delusion."

"The name of the writer," continued Asa, "was Leopold Hamallado."

"That's the thief—the villain's name," interposed the old man.

"When Zella came back to the grotto, I showed her the letter. At first it seemed as though it would kill her. She did not want me to know that I was the guest of an outlaw's child. She knew, however, all about her life. The man whom she had always considered as her father had told her all a few days previous. The news bowed her spirit with grief and shame. The man would not tell her who her father was, nor where he resided. But as soon as I recovered from the effects of my wound, she was to flee the country with me. Once in a place of safety, I was to advertise in the leading papers for her friends. But, alas! The demon Hamallado found my retreat—found Zella there. She was placed in a room under lock and key, while I—well, it is a long story, that I will tell you another time, Basil. But Zella is held a close prisoner, and no telling what may befall her."

"She must be rescued," said the old man.

"She will be, and to-night," said Sheridan.

The three turned and walked leisurely toward camp, and, as they moved along, the old man gave Asa and his son a history of his adventures in the tiger-pit, his escape therefrom, with a crushed and broken arm, and his trials and sufferings in the forest. He finally reached the village of the Navajo Indians in whose midst he received a warm welcome. Every kindness was bestowed upon him by those semi-barbarous people, and under the skillful treatment of an Indian doctor his arm healed rapidly. Still, it was not able to be out of the sling when he bid his Indian friends adieu.

As to their young friend, Nathan Wolfe, Basil knew no more than did Asa.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 266.)

RED ROB, The Boy Road-Agent.

BY OLL COOMES.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE SUNSET DOOM.

A DEEP, ominous murmur followed the reading of the verdict, and a general movement swayed the crowd. Octavia, almost unconscious in her sudden grief, was led away by Maggie from the presence of him she loved.

Expressions of surprise, regret, indignation and triumph beamed upon the faces in the assembly.

"It now becomes the painful duty of the *carrera*," said the judge, clearing his throat with a thunderous "ahem," "to pass sentence upon the prisoner. It, however, the prisoner has anything to say as to why sentence should not be passed he now has the opportunity."

"I was just thinking, Sheridan. I learned something yesterday, from our old negro servant, that has been in the family fifteen years, that I never knew before. It was concerning our family. I had considered my father dead for twelve years, but from the servant I learned that such a thing as his still living is possible. I was away at school, when, for a secret purpose of his own, he left home. The report reached us shortly afterward, that he had been shot as a confederate spy somewhere in Texas. I went out of school into the army, and as I never heard more of him, I supposed he was dead. He told Aunt Shady that, if he did not return inside of twelve years, she should be to flee the country with me. Once in a place of safety, I was to advertise in the leading papers for her friends. But, alas! The demon Ham

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Among the pleasant things which are in store for our Summer and Fall literary campaign is a

ROMANCE OF THE GREAT LAKES
By M. Quad, of the Detroit Free Press, viz.:

The Stolen Fortune:
OR,
A LIFE AT STAKE.

A downright good serial from the noted humorist, whose pen has made more smiles than Hogarth's pencil ever provoked, is certainly one of the treats that even the most abstemious reader will welcome. We have that to offer, and will put it within reach, in due season.

A very enjoyable and interesting series of papers, by GEORGE L. AIKEN, is commenced in this number. The actor life, in all its phases and vicissitudes, will come before the reader, both in interesting personal sketches and data of stage history. The writer has had a wide experience, as boy and man, on the American stage, and from that experience draws the material for these papers

We have, in MRS. E. F. ELLET'S forthcoming serial (to commence in No. 281,) viz.:

Love in a Maze,

a fine love story, and yet one full of adventure and dramatic situations. The romance of a young girl's career, in the struggle for fame as a singer, is made the thread of a very striking delineation of life in "artistic circles," as well as in the social world which deems brown-stone fronts and a carriage necessary to position and influence. The contrast with the "highly-seasoned" and intense narrative of Mrs. Fleming's "Victoria," is great, but it will have a charm of its own that will captivate all readers.

Sunshine Papers.
Centennially.

CENTENNIAL! What a troop of crowding visions that word marshals into array before us; and with what a motley throng are they peopled!

We behold our hero ancestors in their homespun clothes and with rifles that would well-nigh rival a modern howitzer, the well-to-do, frowning Tories, and the red-coated English soldiers; we gaze admiringly upon stately dames in stiff gowns and pompos ruffs, and revolutionary wives in linsey-woolsey dresses and white caps; with awe we mingle in the society of our earliest politicians, gorgeous in knee-breeches and wigs and powder, and our modern politicians, proudly self-conscious of their familiarity with fraud, chicanery, theft and pugilism. We see representatives from every nation, and attire in all its newest styles, and, mayhap, though not given to such trifles, spend a few blissful moments in dreams of our next suit, anxious as to whether it shall trample seven inches or seven and a half! Indeed, the places and events, and people, called to mind by that word—Centennial—are enough to make a respectable place of the moon, could they, with consent of the "man" in it, be transported therethrough.

And it is just delightful, the frequency with which the word is echoed here, there, and everywhere! It is one of our charming American characteristics to run every subject into the ground; a characteristic we uphold with heroic pertinacity, even if it carry us to the excess of rechristening the name of a criminal upon the latest agony in neckties or hats. Spelling-matches are under a spell of centennial, Big Bonanzas have dwindled into littleness, the Brooklyn law-suit has lost its charm of novelty, news is savorless save it savors of centennialism, all things fair and false, marvelous and mysterious, exciting and erudite, have yielded their right to sway the public mind or interest the public reader, and bowed to fate of utter insignificance before this latest rage *la Americaine*.

Everybody is preparing for the coming centennial; nay, even all nature is preparing—for not asparagus so plentiful that it is scarce cut for market, and are not strawberries so cheap that we do not care whether we have any or not? Next year will show a changed state of affairs; these same dainties will recognize the duty they owe to their country; and we may indulge an aristocratic relish for them when they are worth their weight in gold—greenbacks. We have centennial hotels, centennial drinks, centennial hats, centennial songs and gatherings, and signs and advertisements, and panniers and boots, and dinners and speeches. The centennial fever is beating so high, indeed, that many another cause must suffer. At all events, "come what will," everybody who is anybody will go to Philadelphia next year. Not to be at the centennial celebrations will be to ticket oneself out of all eternity as a nobody! There is a saying—no doubt provincial in origin—"See Naples and die!" The motto of Americans, for 1876, will be "Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, go to the centennial!"

One glorious feature of this throng preparing to move toward Philadelphia is that not a few among the crowd will be foreigners. So long and bravely have we displayed the national spirit and independence, inherited from the Revolution, in our attitude toward other peoples, that at last we are to find requital and be largely honored with the light of their countenances! After we have bowed to all

things foreign, and have smiled at French sneers and British insults; after we have called Paris and heaven synonymous, and adored European mustaches as abasely as if we had none in our own land, ought it not to be a season of unalloyed bliss to us "dreadful Americans" that our self-appreciation, dignity, and independence, are, at last, to meet their reward? And, oh! how we will dazzle and astonish our friends from over the Atlantic with our national recklessness and enthusiasm, pomp and glory, extravagance and display!

Summer has "come in a tour with the state," and though we know she has come "too late and returns too soon," we restrain our murmurings as we remember that with each of her meetings, flower-blowing days we are a day's march nearer—the centennial. Already, in visions, we hear cargoes of gunpowder rending the air, see tons of fireworks transfiguring the City of Brotherly Love into a suggestion of other regions, and behold the gorgeousness of American toilets, the marvels of American soil, and the pomp of American song and speech.

Let all nations under the sun, who would

fully realize our greatness, come to our centennial and learn how strikingly like we remain to our worthy ancestors who snapped their fingers at Europe, and wear homemade clothes, and have a first-class gossip over tea made of raspberry leaves!

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

DREAMING AND WORKING.

To dream away one's life may be all pleas-

ant enough but not very profitable, and in these times, we must look pretty closely after the dollars and cents, or we shan't have food for our mouths, fuel for our stoves or clothes for our bodies. We waste many a precious hour in sighing after the unattainable when we could be working hard for that which can be attained.

We are too visionary, and dream

of living in castles in the air when we might

be working for a snug little farm-house. To

dwell among clouds and have the rainbow for

a playmate is intensely romantic, but a nice

kitchen-garden is more practicable and a deal

more profitable.

Am I descending from the sublime to the

ridiculous? I think not. It's only showing

you how much better a useful life is than a

dreaming one. Oh! how many of the hours

the Almighty has given us to be useful in, do

we throw away in vain and idle dreaming

—visions that are never realized and dreams

that never come true!

Many a young girl has refused to work for

living because she has been told that she will

marry some rich man and will then have

nothing to do, so what is the use of her conde-

nding to menial labor? Work soils her

hands and spoils her complexion, all of which

must be kept neat to gladden the eye of that

rich husband who is sure to come, for he has

not been talked of and dreamt about; and, of

course, she must not throw any obstacles in

the way of her fate.

Somehow fate must have made some mis-

ake, for, after years of dreary, desolate wait-

ing, that wonderfully rich man doesn't hap-

pen along, and the girl is obliged to take up

with John Hodge, a poor fellow with small

pay. Her work of the hardest drudgery.

Doubly so to her, because she has been so un-

accustomed to it. She is but a novice at it,

consequently her husband is forever growling

at her because his clothes are not so nicely

washed as his friends, scolds because the vic-

tuals he pays for are spoiled in the cooking,

and his house looks more like a lumber-room than

the habitation for human beings. If they

quarrel, people will tell you it is from incom-

patibility of temper. I should tell you that

while she has been dreaming he has been work-

ing. If you talk kindly to her and tell her

that if she were to take more pains with what

she does, matters might progress more smooth-

ly, she will give you an indignant frown, and

drawing herself up to her full height, she will

exclaim; in scornful tones: "I wasn't brought

up to work!"

If you've got one atom of spunk in your

body you will be justified in saying: "Well,

it's a mighty great pity that you were not."

Few there are who have the courage to say

that they work for a living; work seems to be a

hard word for them to utter. Not long ago I

overheard a young girl remark: "Just think!

When Mr. Barton came I was actually mak-

ing pies. He found me cooking. What do you

suppose he must have thought to have seen me

at work? I was almost ashamed enough to

hide behind the door."

I don't know who the said Mr. Barton was,

but if he was any sort of a being endowed

with sense he would much rather have found

the little lady working than dreaming.

We should be thankful that we have the

work to do; it is this work that makes men

and women of us and helps us along through

life. Work keeps despondency away; it

double-locks the door on melancholy, and fast-

ens the latch against gloominess. If we were

to dream over our troubles, our crosses and

losses, we should find them harder to endure

than if we to employ our minds about some

thing more profitable.

A dreamer of a captain will never bring his

ship safely to shore; the engineer who sleeps

at his work will not be likely to guide his

train aright, and those who dream that fortu-

ne will attend them without their seeking

for it will find themselves woefully mistaken,

and their awakening prove how fallacious are

such visionary ideas.

"Worth makes the man," and so does work.

There should be no room in this world for

those who are above working for a living, for

they are below contempt.

It is time to wake

these dreamers up and set them to some task

—to stir the dross in this great hive of a

world, and show them if they will not be busy

bees they mustn't clog the way of those who

are willing to work. "Work and win" is a

good motto, and it gains many a battle. What

good will one do who dreams and loses? Not

the smallest particle of an atom, except to

serve as a "frightful example" of the effects

of laziness.

EVIL LAWLESS.

SUMMER HINTS.

It is no wonder that people want to leave

the sultry and heated streets of the city, and

go into the country, when the summer comes,

but the greatest mystery to be solved is why

they should desire to go to the crowded water-

places and put up with such crowded

rooms as they would be loth to occupy in their

own mansions, and have to be so particular as

to keep dressed in elegant attire and pay ruinous

prices for board.

Why not go into some quiet country-place

and live at a farmer's house? If the host can-

not offer you all you would have at a first-

class hotel he can offer you such sweet and

"OUR JULY."

BY FRANK M. IMBIE.

A cloud crept slowly up the eastern sky; 'Twas darkly flushed, as with a wine-tint stain, Strong, stalwart yeomen watched it as it turned, 'Twas on the field, flashing land and main, 'Midst falling fire, that the great seas of death, With one convulsive throb was rent in twain, And LIBERTY, traced as with lightning's fire, Blazed 'gainst the heavens its blood-pa'd deathless name.

A nation grasped the staff that 'neath the sky Fleated its snow of peace; its vivid bars; Then fluttered earthward with its heaven-bequest An azure field, blazoned with the unheeded stars; Glad hearts sang 'till the day to the sun came, Echoed the others from lips of sea-bronzed tars Our dear old flag, born at a nation's birth, A nation's pang that shook the very earth.

Far, far it waved to yonder sunbright land, Where pink magnolias threw their tropic shade;

Where fleecy Hells the Southlands zephyrs fanned; Where glow-worms lit the dusky everglade;

Where Ponce and Leon sought elixir springs;

'Bove orange groves, in green and gold arrayed; Where from the mast-head of her anchored ships Old Charlestown harbor pressed it to her lips.

The Mississippi's mouth upon the western breeze; The red-man started from his forest haunts, Saw spectral flashes bursting through the trees, New England's sons, with resonant, joy mad shout,

Vaunted their victory far o'er land and seas;

The North reverberant with the clanging tone of iron-tongued musk, shook from base to dome.

What said it then? A nation's freedom won!

"Won! As free as God's free light!

What says the world? 'Twas a name,

Unshilled in its glory, strength and might;

Arouse the loyal blood that, years ago,

Wrot INDEPENDENCE in our Country's might;

Ring in the zenith of our Country's pride!

With shouts of triumph high on every side!

Not a Heroine.

BY JENNIE DAVIS BURTON.

FLAT and dull and gray as all her life had been, thought Janet Real, as she stood looking across the marsh where the lake lay, ripples, leaden, the rustle of the rushes where the wind stirred them only adding a dismal sound to a dismal scene. Hidden in the midst of the marsh crept a sluggish river; on the single knoll which rose in relief to that dead flat stood the only house in sight, a bare wooden structure upon which the wind and the weather had worked their will unhindered by paint or other protection, until the place had gained its single feature which was not repulsive—the transformation from new wood color to Vandike brown, lichens and moss growing in patches all over the roof and fringing the eaves.

"One might better be dead," cried Janet, passionately, quite beneath her breath. Either great joy or great despair is apt to be voiceless. "I do believe I shall go down to that pool some day and make an end of it all. What is life worth with only this to look forward to forever?"

"You Janet," called a shrill voice. "A dawlk right in this minute, straight. S'ch a dawlk as you be, but you ain't a-goin' to shirk this ironin' if I know it. You'll do every stitch of them duds if it takes you to pitch night, that I tell you now."

A hatchet-faced woman stood in the door, a woman you would know at a glance to be an old maid with all the "milk of human kindness" dried out of her nature long ago; one might fancy it had been sour milk in her case at its best. It was Hepsy Real, whose indomitable energy and sharp tongue had gained her notoriety among her country neighbors for miles around.

Janet turned slowly from her place under the Linden tree and went in, a sullen look upon the face which might have been pretty, lit up by any pleasanter expression.

"There you are again, slower 'n doom. For goodness' gracious' sake, do see if you can't earn your salt for on't. If you took after our side, I wouldn't need to be forever nagging, but you're your mother over again, as do-less a critter as ever breathed."

"I'll thank you to let my mother alone, which is more than you ever do me," flashed Janet.

It had always been a bitter war between those two, Miss Hepsy and her dependent orphan niece, and who can wonder that under such an auspice the girl's nature had developed its worst phases? After that first retort, however, the vials of Miss Hepsy's wrath were poured out unmet by either check or remonstrance. Janet scorned to engage in a contest of words where she was sure to be worsted, but a red angry flame burned in her cheeks, and her lips set in a straight line of defiance, as she went about her distasteful task. She did not like work, and she seldom did it except with a kind of silent protest which never failed to arouse her thrifty aunt's ire. This afternoon, however, she ironed with a vigor which fairly won her an approving glance at last. Muslins gleamed in snowy folds and the unsightly rolls in the clothes-basket dwindled; the last garment passed under the hot flat just as the odors of tea and biscuit began to dispense themselves throughout the house.

"Done," commented Miss Hepsy, in what was for her a gracious tone. "Come to supper then."

Janet declined the invitation; she did not want any supper; that was all, she supposed; then she was going out of doors, and aunt Hepsy needn't call her if it was dark.

She tied on her battered straw hat and went down the garden walk, where brilliant hollyhocks flaunting on either side were having their colors blotted out by the dusk.

"Off for one of her tramps," thought Hepsy Real, as she looked after her. "The most cur'us girl I ever did see—not a bit like one of us" and that was Miss Real's bitterest trial in life.

Those long walks were Janet's only solace; in them she could sometimes outdistance that restless familiar which haunted all her days, that longing unutterable for something, anything, outside this monotonous existence of hers.

The west was crimson-streaked, but overhead and toward the east stars were twinkling faintly as yet against a canopy of silver-blue. Did they look down anywhere in this wide world upon a more desolate life than hers? Janet wondered. Far away by the wagon-road which skirted the sedgy lands, making a circle to the leaden lake, where her reflection loomed back at her under the starlight dim and ghostly, the vapor from the marshes grotesquely exaggerating the indistinct semblance.

"Ah, you would like to tempt me," apostrophized Janet, as she looked down upon. The day arrived when Mr. Tessey had no longer excuse for remaining, when looking pale and interesting still, handsome always, he made his adieu and departed.

"Will you welcome me when I come again, Janet?" he had asked, with one of those glances which said so much more than words, which set the girl's foolish heart throbbing tumultuously and gave her food for hope through many long days to follow.

distant cry for help. She stopped, listened; it came again—"Hallo, help here!" and then a loud, shrill whistle twice or thrice.

The cry she understood; some one was lost in the swamp.

She lifted her voice and called in reply, without an instant's hesitation, and turned from the path in the direction from which the sounds came. The season had been a dry one, fortunately, but the way lay ankle-deep through water and mud after the first few steps. On, stumbling through the network of roots which made the only solidity of foothold there, stopping to call and listen, working her way more cautiously as the marsh began to deepen where it merged into the river. Surely she must be near the spot now; she called aloud again:

"Where are you?"

"Here," answered the voice, closer than she had expected. "But, good heavens! it can't be—a lady? Is the path there?"

"No, I heard you call, and came to help you if I can. You must be in the river, I think."

"I think so myself; waist-deep, and wouldn't have stopped there but I got hold of a root. I had no idea of which way to turn without submerging completely. It's safe to try to reach you, I suppose?"

He did not wait for a reply. He approached with a laborious movement, after what seemed an age gained the comparatively secure footing where she stood. She could distinguish that he was a young man under the starlight, nothing more.

"I beg your pardon," he said, lifting his hat before her. "I have given you trouble, but since you have done this much, can you favor me still further by showing me the way out?"

The way out! Urged by the knowledge of a human being in distress, she had been enabled to reach the place, but to retrace the way was quite another thing. They might make the attempt and reach the path or solid ground in safety, or they might wander on until daybreak in those long low reaches, not to mention the discomfort of sinking to unknown depths when least expecting it. She explained briefly. The wilderness of scrubby growth on all sides afforded no landmark; it bewildered her when she tried to point out the direction she had come.

"If my horse was only here now," said he, regretfully. "I was going to Marshville—the nearest town—and made a cut across the country. Somehow I stumbled into this miserable bog. Prince grew frightened; I dismounted, thinking to pick my course better on foot, and he broke loose and deserted me to my fate. It might have been a harder one but for you. We must do something, that is certain; you are shivering, and no wonder, wet as you must be. His own teeth were chattering in the chill night-air. 'Prince would come at my call if he were within hearing, but I doubt; I tried before."

Nevertheless he tried again, giving the loud shrill whistle she had heard, repeated many times but without result.

"It isn't the pleasantest dilemma in life, but we must keep moving if only to prevent freezing to death. Take my arm and let us make the attempt."

It was not romantic, plunging wildly through tangled rushes higher than their heads, their steps leader-weighted, their progress so slow as to make the shortest way out of their difficulty seem terribly remote, but it was the way Janet's romance began. How the night's adventure might have ended but for help which came there is no telling. Help did come in shape of the deserter Prince, and standing upright upon his back his master made out a light twinkling dimly in the distance.

"You do remember her?" Something like fine scorn tinged the clear voice there.

"Perhaps you may remember also what she expected of you when you left her, what she has lived expecting from you through the six years since. I put it to you if it was quite honorable to win the regard of such an inexperienced child, to give her grounds for hoping much from you—oh, yes, you did, in words which might not have committed you to one worldly wise as I am, but certainly to her! Was it honorable, I ask, to leave her without one word of explanation, even though your transitory—what shall I call it—infatuation, or perhaps interest, had passed?"

His face had taken on a dull pallor, but a gleam of deep earnestness shot athwart it.

"How you may have learned that, Miss Delroy, I cannot even guess. I may have been culpable; I admit that I was in some degree; but was not generous enough to consider what was mere amusement to me might more seriously affect her; though what girl has not had her first dream of liking—love, then, if you prefer—and forgotten it? This I do declare most solemnly, I have never loved any woman but one, that one yourself. If you care for me, with one tithe of the love I have for you, that trifle of the past would never weigh against me."

"If I care?" An inscrutable look was upon her face. "I am going to be honest with you, Mr. Tessey. I care so much I would not have you offer me your hand and name while another has a claim upon you. Janet Real has; you owe her the proposal you have made to me. If you can come to me free by her rejection of you, I will listen then, not before."

"Is this final? Will nothing else suffice?"

He did not need to ask; he read how irrevocable her decision was in her face, and he went out of her presence with his purpose fixed.

Janet Real might be married or dead; she might have outlived the sentiment of six years ago, or—she had been a tender-hearted little thing—she might take pity upon him and prove herself more generous than he had been to her.

And yet it was with a cowardly heart, a shrinking premonition, a terrible dread he could not shake off, that he rode up to the old bleak farm-house one week later. Evening was dropping grayly down, the dismal scene spread out as dimly as ever in the time past, and for all the change apparent in it or in Miss Hepsy Real as she appeared in the open door, it might have been but yesterday that he, a conquering paladin in that grim fortress, had ridden away.

The spinster's sharp glance had changed to one of astonishment.

"Why, it do be Mr. Tessey. Come right in; I'm glad to see you, to be sure. Yes, sir, Janet's to home; cur'us, too. She's gone down to the lake yonder; p'raps you may have a glimpse of her from there."

"I see her. I will leave my horse and walk down there to meet her. I've a message to deliver from a—a friend of hers."

He threw the bridle-rein over the gate-post and hurried away to escape the look of surprise which he felt must have come into Miss Hepsy's face. On the lake shore a tall form with something scarlet draped about her was pacing up and down. In the gloom of the close-growing cypresses there he could see no more. She did not turn at sound of his footsteps; he paused more embarrassed than he cared to confess, half regretting that he had come, but steeling himself by one thought of Netta Delroy to make the plunge, to decide his fate and those forever.

"Miss Real!"

The shape turned; what was there so strange and familiar in the poise, the motion, to leave him staring in amaze and doubt. She took a step forward and the gray light slanted over a fair, proud face he knew well, every lineament of

which she welcome him? would she welcome the sunshine or the sweet short summer-time in that gloomy marsh country? She had implicit faith in that promise implied that he would come again. Had he not in words said "I love you?"—had he not all but said "Come with me?" But he never came.

He was not much worse than the majority of young men; he had only lightened that week from the path in the direction from which the sounds came. The season had been a dry one, fortunately, but the way lay ankle-deep through water and mud after the first few steps. On, stumbling through the network of roots which made the only solidity of foothold there, stopping to call and listen, working her way more cautiously as the marsh began to deepen where it merged into the river. Surely she must be near the spot now; she called aloud again:

"How is it under our control, To love or not to love?"

He had spoken and he awaited his answer. He fairly held his breath, his soul looked out through his eyes in an impasioned restraint, not to mention the discomfort of sinking to unknown depths when least expecting it. She explained briefly. The wilderness of scrubby growth on all sides afforded no landmark; it bewildered her when she tried to point out the direction she had come.

"If my horse was only here now," said he, regretfully. "I was going to Marshville—the nearest town—and made a cut across the country. Somehow I stumbled into this miserable bog. Prince grew frightened; I dismounted, thinking to pick my course better on foot, and he broke loose and deserted me to my fate. It might have been a harder one but for you. We must do something, that is certain; you are shivering, and no wonder, wet as you must be. His own teeth were chattering in the chill night-air. 'Prince would come at my call if he were within hearing, but I doubt; I tried before."

Nevertheless he tried again, giving the loud shrill whistle she had heard, repeated many times but without result.

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grand and scornful lady—say, if he stood before her like a great schoolboy, and blushingly blurted out his grand passion for the fisherman's daughter. His cheeks reddened at the very thought; and feeling that the eagle eyes were piercing him like needles, he looked up and confronted them with a gaze quite as unflinching and almost as haughty.

"You are somewhat inconsistent, Lady Agnes. You gave me *carte blanche* a moment ago to love as many as I pleased!"

"I gave you absolute for the past, not indulgence for the future! With Leicester Cliffe and his amours I have nothing to do, but the husband of my granddaughter must be true to her as the needle to the North Star!"

He bowed in haughty silence. Lady Agnes looked at him searchingly, and calmed down.

"If we commence at daggers drawn," she said, still laughing her satirical laugh, "we will certainly end in war to the knife! Listen to me, Leicester, my nephew, the last of the Cliffe, and learn why it is that this marriage is so dear to my heart—why it has been my dream by day and by night since I first saw Victoria. Some of the noblest names in the peerage have been laid this winter at my granddaughter's feet, and by me rejected—she, the most dutiful child in the world, never objecting. You know what an heiress she is—worth at least twenty thousand a year: and do you think I would willingly let the millions of our family go to swell the rent-roll of some impoverished foreign duke, or spendthrift English earl? You are the last, except my son and Sir Roland, bearing the name of Cliffe; they will never marry, and I don't want a name that existed before the Conqueror to pass from our branch of the family. By your marriage with my granddaughter, the united fortunes of the Cliffe and Shirleys will mingle, and the name will descend, noble and honored, to posterity, as it has been honored in the past. It is for you to decide whether these hopes are to be realized or disappointed. Victoria has no will but that of her natural guardians, and your decision must be quick; for I'm determined she shall leave town engaged."

"You shall have my answer to-night!" said Leicester, rising and taking his hat.

"That is well! We go to the theater to-night, and you may come to our box."

"I shall not fail to do so! Until then, adieu! and *au revoir*!"

Lady Agnes held out her hand with a gracious smile, but he just touched it, and ran down-stairs. As he passed through the lower hall, the library door stood ajar; he caught sight of a figure sitting in the recess of a window. It was Margaret, holding a book listlessly in one hand, while the other supported her cheek. She was looking out at the square, where a German band was playing "Love Not," and her face wore a look so lonely and so sad that it touched him to the heart. If Leicester Cliffe had one really pure feeling for any human being, it was—strangely enough—for this plain, silent cousin of his, whom nobody ever noticed. He went in, and was bending over her, with his fair hair touching her cheek, before she heard him.

"Maggie—little cousin—what is the matter?"

She started up with a suppressed cry, her dark face turning, for a moment, brightest crimson, and then white, even to the lips.

"Oh, Leicester!" she cried, laying her hand on her fast-throbbing heart; "how could you startle me so?"

"Did I? I am sorry! What a nervous little puss is! Her gracious majesty, up-stairs, told me you were asleep."

"For shame, sir! Have you been with Lady Agnes?"

"Oh, haven't I?" said Leicester, making a slight grimace. "What are you doing here alone? Why are you not out riding with your cousin?"

"I prefer being here. Won't you sit down?"

"No! What makes you so pale? I remember, long ago, when we played hide-and-seek together in the old hall of Castle Cliffe, you had cheeks like rose berries, but they are as white as those lace curtains now."

"Oh, rare, pale Margaret!"

"Oh, fair, pale Margaret!"

tell your old playfellow what it is all about."

She glanced up for a moment at the handsome face bending over her, and then stooped lower over her book, turning almost paler than before.

"My good little cousin, tell me what it means."

"Nothing."

"I know better! Young ladies don't go about like white shadows, with as much life in them as one of those marble statues, for nothing. Are you ill?"

"No!"

"Are you happy?"

"Yes!"

"Is that grand sultana up-stairs good to you?"

"Very."

"And the princess royal—how does she treat you?"

"Cousin Victoria is like a sister."

"Then what, in Heaven's name, has crushed all the life out of the little Maggie Shirley I romped with long since? Do you know you're but the ghost of your former self, Maggie?"

She did not speak—she only held the book closer to her face, and something fell on it, and wet it. There was a tap on the door, and a servant entered.

"Miss Margaret, my lady wants you to come and read to her."

"I must go, Leicester. Good-morning!"

She was gone in an instant, and Leicester, feeling there was a screw loose somewhere, and, like all of his stupid sex, too blind to guess within a mile of the truth, went down the steps, took his horse from the groom in waiting, and dashed off through the Park. As he entered Rotten Row, he was confronted by three equestrians: Colonel Shirley, his daughter, and Tom. The image of Victoria had been before him all the way, flashing in lace and jewels as he had seen her last night, but now she dawned upon him in quite another vision of beauty. From her childhood the girl had taken to riding as naturally as she had to sleeping, and she sat her spirited Arabian with as easy a grace as she would have sat on a sofa. Nothing could have been more bewitching than the exquisitely-fitting habit of dark-blue cloth; the exuberant curls confined in a net, seeing that curls under a riding-hat are an abomination; her fair cheeks flushed with exercise; the violet eyes sparkling and laughing with the very happiness of living on such a day, and the rosy lips all dimpled with glad smiles. She touched her black-plumed hat coquettishly, *a la militaire*, with her yellow-gauntleted hand, as the young gentleman bowed before her.

"Well met, Cliffe!" said the colonel; "we were just speaking of you. Come home and din with us."

"Thanks. I regret to say I am already engaged."

"To-morrow, then! Have you any engagement for to-night? We are for the theater."

"None; and I have promised her ladyship to drop into her box. Miss Shirley, I need not ask if you have recovered from the fatigue of last night; you are as radiant as a rose."

"Oh, I am never fatigued!" said Miss Shirley, with her frank laugh. "Papa, come; Claude is impatient. *Au revoir*, Mr. Cliffe."

She looked back at him with a saucy glance, waving her hand, and the next moment was dashing away out of sight. And Leicester Cliffe went to his hotel to dress for dinner, with "a dancing shape, an image gay," haunting his mind's eye, to the exclusion of everything else—the princess royal on horseback.

The dinner-party at Lord Henry Lisle's was a very noisy and prolonged affair indeed.

Leicester, thinking of the theater, wished them all at Jericho a thousand times before it was over. The Rose of Sussex was toasted so often in punch and port, thick and sweet, that the whole party were rather glorious when they issued forth—Leicester excepted.

Remembering his engagement, he had not imbibed quite so much of the rosy as the rest, and was all right when he presented himself, according to order, at the stage-box belonging to the Shirleys. Lady Agnes was there, as usual, in a splendid toilet; beside her sat Vivian, looking like an angel in more antique and emeralds, with a magnificent opera-cloak half-dropping off her bare and beautiful shoulders.

Tom was leaning devotedly over her chair, talking nonsense very fast, at all of which Miss Shirley was good-natured enough to laugh; and Margaret, very simply dressed, according to custom, sat very still and quiet under the shadows of the curtains. The colonel was absent; and Lady Agnes received him with gracious reproach.

"Lazy boy! The first act is over, and you are late, as usual! Such a charming play—

"*Undine!*" Tom, hold your tongue, and use your eyes, or else go and talk to Margaret! There she sits, like little Jack Horner, alone in the corner, moping!"

Vivian turned her beautiful face and welcomed him with a bewildering smile; and Tom, deaf to his aunt's hint, merely moved aside a little; while the new-comer bent over her chair to pay his respects. The wine he had been drinking had merely raised his spirits to an excellent talking-point. Vivian was a good talker, too; and in ten minutes conversation was in full flow.

"Have you ever seen that play—*Undine?*" she was asking.

"Never."

"Ah! it is beautiful! I love it, because I love *Undine* herself. Do you know, monsieur, I took fancy to study German first for the purpose of reading *Undine* in the original? Look! the curtain is rising now!"

It went up as she spoke, and showed the knight battling with the spirits in the enchanted wood. Leicester looked at the stage and smiled.

"This first visit to the theater since my return to England reminds me of the first time I ever visited a theater at all."

"Do you remember it? It must have been a long time ago?"

"It is. It is eighteen years. I was in a box with Lady Agnes and my mother; and, opposite, sat Sir Roland and your father, then Lieutenant Cliffe, Lord Lisle and that yellow lawyer—a money-lender he was then—Mr. Sweet. It made a vivid impression on me—the lights, the gay dresses and the brilliant scenery. I forgot what the play was, but I know the house was crowded, because it was the last appearance of a beautiful actress, Madame—"

He had been speaking with animation, but he stopped suddenly; for the beautiful face was crimson, and there was a quick uplifting of the haughty head, which reminded him forcibly of Lady Agnes.

"Mademoiselle Vivian!" she said, lifting her violet eyes with a bright free glance to his face. "My mother—my beautiful mother, whom I have never seen!"

"Miss Shirley, I did not mean—I never thought! Can you forgive me?"

"Out of my heart, monsieur. See, there is *Undine!*"

She leaned forward. A tumult of applause told the house, and he bent over too. There was the sea-coast and the fisherman's cottage, and there from the sea-foam rose "*Undine*," robed in white, with lilies in her hair. It reminded Tom Shirley of the "*Infant Venus*;" the same, though he did not know it. In the daze of the music, and lights, and the girl beside him, he had not thought of her before; and now her memory came back with a pang, and half-pleasure, half-pain. Somehow, Vivian's thoughts, by some mysterious *rappart*, were straying in the same direction too.

"Monsieur Cliffe," she said, so suddenly lifting her violet eyes that he was disconcerted, "do you know Barbara?"

The guilty blood flew to his face, and he drew back to avoid the innocent eyes.

"I have seen her!"

She laughed a gay little mischievous laugh.

"I know that!" Tom told me all about the May Queen, and how you were struck. I don't know how it is, but "*Undine*" always reminds me of Barbara."

"Does she?"

"Yes. Barbara was a little water-sprite herself, you know; and I wonder she has not melted away into a miniature cascade before this. Did she ever tell you she saved my life?"

"No!"

"Proud girl! Spartan Barbara! Is she as handsome as she was long ago?"

"She is very handsome."

Mentally she rose before him as he spoke in her mimic chariot, crowned and sceptered, with eyes shining like stars, and cheeks like June roses; and he drew still further back, lest the violet eyes should read his guilt in his face. She drew back a little herself, to avoid the fire of lorgnettes directed at their box—some at the great Sussex heiress, others to the noble and lovely head alone.

"*Undine* reminds me of her," she went on, "only '*Undine*' died of a broken heart; and if Barbara were deceived, I think—"

She stopped with a blush and a laugh.

"Go on, Miss Shirley."

"I think—but I am foolish, perhaps—that she would have revenge; that she would have it in her to kill her betrayer, instead of melting away into the sea of neglect, and being heard of no more."

He turned pale as he looked at the stage, where stood the false knight and his high-born bride, while *Undine* floated away in the moonlight, singing her death-song. Again Vivian leaned forward to look.

"Poor, forsaken '*Undine*!' Ah! how I have half-cried my eyes out over the story! and how I hate that treacherous Huldebrand! I could—could almost kill him myself!"

"Have you no pity for him?" said Leicester, turning paler, as he identified himself with the condemned knight. "Think how beautiful

Bertralda is; and '*Undine*' was only the fisherman's daughter!"

"That makes it all the worse! Knights should have nothing to do with fishermen's daughters!"

"Not even if they are beautiful!"

"No; eagles don't mate with birds of paradise."

"How haughty you are!"

"Not at all. You know the proverb, 'Birds of a feather.' Poor Barbara! I do pity her for being poor!"

"Does wealth constitute happiness?"

"I don't know; but I do know that poverty would constitute misery for me. I am thankful I am Victoria Shirley, the heiress of Castle Cliffe; and I would not be any one else for the princess royal on horseback."

The dinner-party at Lord Henry Lisle's was a very noisy and prolonged affair indeed.

Leicester, thinking of the theater, wished them all at Jericho a thousand times before it was over.

The Rose of Sussex was toasted so often in punch and port, thick and sweet, that the whole party were rather glorious when they issued forth—Leicester excepted.

"Oh, I am never fatigued!" said Miss Shirley, with her frank laugh. "Papa, come; Claude is impatient. *Au revoir*, Mr. Cliffe."

She looked back at him with a saucy glance, waving her hand, and the next moment was dashing away out of sight. And Leicester Cliffe went to his hotel to dress for dinner, with "a dancing shape, an image gay," haunting his mind's eye, to the exclusion of everything else—the princess royal on horseback.

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"Spare me this discussion, Mr. Powell. Is there no one else to whom I may go for the facts and allegations?"

At this moment, a firm step and the regular fall of a cane was heard in the outer room.

"Here is Mr. Carrington," said the banker; and as he entered, addressed him: "Father, you will bear with me if I shift a painful office to your shoulders. I am going out, and will leave you and this dear girl together. Tell her all that she wishes to know. You will excuse me, Miss Goldthorp; I go to keep an appointment."

As the banker withdrew, Mr. Carrington laid aside his hat and cane, and seated himself on a sofa. He removed her hat, and drawing her head to his shoulder and kissing her tenderly on the brow, he said, while he caressed her glossy hair with his hands:

"Well, what is it, my little girl? What do you wish to know?"

"Dear Mr. Carrington," said Florence, with tears in her eyes, "what dreadful suspicion is resting against Frederick?"

"You call him Frederick?" asked the old man, with a look of regret.

"He is my affianced husband," was the low reply.

He drew her closer, and patted her head with a fatherly caress that was like a benediction.

"This is a sad world we live in," he said, with tears in his eyes, and in a voice as gentle as a woman's. "How little we can read the future. How little we know how many hearts will be blighted by one act of sin."

"Don't! don't!" pleaded the girl, pitifully. "I can't bear to hear you speak in that way. You are condemning him."

"Florence," said the old man, "I need not tell you how I love you. Years and years ago, when your father's father was a lad, we played with the same ball, eat from the same dinner-basket, and studied from the same books. The desire of our hearts was not carried out. Our blood was not destined to mingle in the first generation. My darling Martha and your father did not love each other, as we prayed that they might. Then my hopes centered in Martha's child and in you."

"I cannot express to you, my child, the joy of seeing the hope of a long life, once disappointed, at last approaching its fulfillment. With such emotions I noted the boy's growing embarrassment when alone in your presence, and the quick flush and pallor of your cheek, if by chance his hand unexpectedly touched yours. I prayed that you might love each other; I saw it approaching, day by day; and now, in the answer to my prayer I recognize the bitterest blow of all. I sought to bless Charley's grandchild; and in my blindness I prayed for what will prove a curse!"

With a tremulous cry, she put her hand on his lips.

"Stop! oh, stop!" she cried, wildly; for it seemed as if he were cursing her lover. "You do not know! He is innocent! Oh, believe me, he is innocent!"

"My poor, poor child!—Charley's child! how my heart bleeds for you!" murmured the old man, tears trickling down his snowy beard and falling on her raven hair.

"Oh! will you not cease? Do not you see that you are tearing my heart by persisting in such inflexible condemnation? Tell me of what he is accused. 'He' could not, he was so cut to the heart."

"You have seen him?"

"Yes; and so bowed to the earth beneath the load of injustice that even your cold judgment must have faltered."

"And he did not tell you his crime—nay, crimes?"

"Stop! I will not listen to you!" she cried, with a burst of passionate indignation. "You speak of him as a criminal, guilty and already convicted of the act. I did not ask you for that. Tell me the accusation—nay, the lying, villainous calumny that has been brought against him; and reserve your judgment!"

"Did not he tell you the charges?" asked the old man, humorously.

"No! I tell you he could not! He was wild with grief and despair! Your barbarity had crushed him!"

"The boy has some good in him. He could not bear to blast your happiness with his own lips—or was it that he dared not?"

His mind was not as flexible as a younger man's would have been. Conviction was rooted deep in his nature, and he could not open his mouth without condemning his grandson.

She stamped her foot in an ebullition of rage.

"Out upon you for a coward! yourself! You profess to love me for the sake of my father and of my father's father, yet you mock my grief! It was by such cold, adamantine judgment that you goaded him to the verge of madness!"

Then she broke down and fell to weeping hysterically.

"Forgive me! forgive me, my child!" murmured the old man, gathering her to his breast again. "If I am hard upon him, it is because my love for him was so strong, and this terrible blow has cloven clear down to the quick. I have embarked all my hopes in a single ship, and I see it before me a total wreck. Loving him as I do, could I do him an injustice?"

"No; not willingly. But you were blinded by appearances; you deemed him guilty; and would not listen to what he had to say."

"He was dumb. He could say nothing."

"Stunned by the bitterness of your denunciation. But the charges—what are they?"

"I cannot bring myself to wound you by the rehearsal of them."

"But do not you see that this suspense is killing me! I know that it is all a base fabrication—a conspiracy to ruin him. I will bring the facts to light, and drag the infamous perpetrators to punishment. Tell me of what he is accused. I entreat you!"

The old man shook his head in sorrow, as he yielded to her demand; and holding her hand in his, and regarding her with a look of almost infinite compassion, he said:

"First, of drunkenness!"

She started back with such a look of incredulity as Mary might have given, had she been told that the Son of God was an impostor.

"It is the bitter, heartrending truth!" said the old man, with his head resting in his hand and his eyes on the ground.

"Who are his accusers?"

"Do not put it in that way. They are near and dear ones. They would not accuse him, though they broke their hearts in grief over his sin."

"The witnesses, then?"

"His father—his sister! He was brought to them almost insensible with alcohol; he slept in their presence like a brute!"

"Oh, God!"

She fell back against the wall, breathless, almost lifeless; and when he tried to comfort

her, she wrung her hands, and wept and moaned as if her heart would break.

"Forgive me, oh, my child!" said the old man. "I should not have yielded to you. I knew that you were not strong enough to bear it."

"No, no! I am strong—I will be strong! Tell me all—all!"

"My poor girl, do not pursue this further. Tell me all! I will! she almost screamed.

"What next?—do you hear?—what next?"

"Gambling!" said the old man, in despair.

"Never! Never! It is a base, infamous lie!"

"He confessed it to his father?"

She looked at him in a deadly calm—a white horror that froze her face to marble. She could not doubt his veracity; she doubted the evidence of her senses.

"What?" she asked, in a hoarse whisper.

"He confessed it to his father?" repeated Mr. Carrington.

She said not a word. She sat rocking to and fro, staring dumbly, not at him, but away from him, into vacancy.

The old man was awed by her unutterable woe. He was terrified by the unnatural calm that was upon her. If she would weep and moan, it would relieve her. But this fearful tension—it could not last; she would go mad.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 271.)

Overland Kit:

OR,
THE IDYL OF WHITE PINE.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,
AUTHOR OF "WITCHES OF NEW YORK," "WOLF DEMON," "WHITE WITCH," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE VIGILANTES.

For a few moments, there was silence in the entry-way. Bill almost fancied that he could hear the beating of his heart. As for the other two, they were too much absorbed in their common speculations as to the hand that had brought death to the drunken man to think of aught else.

Although they had not said so in words, yet both the Judge and Rennet felt sure that they could name the person who had struck the murderous blow, and that they both suspected the same person.

Bill felt as if he was under the influence of some horrid dream. He had guessed the thoughts of the others, and, though he had fought manfully against it, yet the terrible suspicion had crept into his mind also. Bill could hardly believe that he was awake, and it was not until he had stily bitten of the finger that he became convinced of the fact.

"Yes; but, Judge, I don't see what excuse we have got for making an example out of Talbot," said another of the committee, Ben Hayes by name, who kept a general store next to the Eldorado.

"But is there any reason, Judge, to connect Dick Talbot with this murder?" one of the committee asked.

"Well, no—not exactly," the Judge replied slowly. "Still, as he is looked up to by a great many of these desperados as a sort of a leader it would be as well to make an example of him and so strike terror into the rest."

"Yes; but, Judge, I don't see what excuse we have got for making an example out of Talbot," said another of the committee, Ben Hayes by name, who kept a general store next to the Eldorado.

"Well, only that he is the most conspicuous one of these roughs who are disgracing our town by their presence," Jones said.

"It's true he don't work for a living and gets his bread by playing cards; there ain't any thing so very bad about that, anyway—at least, not out in this region. They say he always plays a fair, square game, and never takes advantage of any man. Of course the men who play with him intend to win his money if they can; and I don't think much of a man who sits down to play cards with a gambler, and then squeals because he loses his money."

"To judge from your words, Hayes, you think that this reckless desperado is rather an honor to our town than a disgrace," Jones said, tartly.

"No, I don't think any thing of the kind," Hayes replied, bluntly; "but I don't believe in giving a dog a bad name and then hanging him right off. I go in for justice every time. I don't say but what our town would be better without Dick Talbot than with him; but, I ain't sure of it. I'm perfectly willing to ask him to leave town if the sentiment of our citizens is that way; but it ain't, and I know that it ain't. And I tell you, right out, fair and square, Judge, if we try to string Injun Dick up without reason, we'll have our hands full."

"I kinder think Hayes is right there," said another of the citizens.

"But if the evidence proved that Talbot had a hand in the murder of this miner, Tendall?" asked the Judge.

"Why, then we'll have a right to put him through," replied Hayes; "but I say, Judge, we'll give him a fair shake."

"Certainly; we will! keep justice on our side," the Judge said, blandly.

"Be sure you're right, and then go ahead!" that's my motto!" exclaimed Hayes.

"Of course; unless we represent the whole of Spur City, our power amounts to but little. The people must be with us and not against us. The honest and peaceable citizens must feel that we are doing them a service in rid- ing out our community of the desperadoes who have sought refuge here, or we shall be acting with our hands tied."

"I can hardly find it in my heart to admit this dreadful suspicion," Jones said, slowly.

"It is dreadful, but looks are sometimes deceptive. I think that if we proceed cautiously and promptly, we shall be able to find some other important proofs," Rennet observed.

"You think, then, that we had better act at once?"

"Yes," Rennet replied.

"Very well; I'll leave you in charge of the house and the body while I go and rouse the citizens. We shall have to call upon the Vigilantes in this matter; Injun Dick and his friends will probably attempt to give us trouble. Now that we have got our hand in, we might as well rid Spur City of the miners camp had never been "purified," to the end of a rope as a warning. I think that we had better not proceed to active measures until morning. Do you think that there's any danger of the party attempting to escape?"

"No," Rennet replied; "all is dark in the room—gone to bed, of course."

"Plucky, eh?"

"More bravado than any thing else."

"Well, you and Bill keep watch here. After day-break the Vigilantes will be here. With this assurance, Judge Jones took his departure.

"I feel like a durned fool in this hyer mat'—Bill liked our durned fool. "I wish I'd druv my coach back to Austin instead of lettin' Ike go in my place; but, I won't believe it; darned off I'll."

"You'll find out before to-morrow night," Rennet said, dryly. Then he examined his watch. "Half after two; we shan't have a great while to wait until day-break. Suppose you go in the room there and bring out a couple of chairs."

"What, whar' the dead man is?"

"Yes."

"No, I'm durned if I do!" exclaimed Bill, with a shiver. "I ain't afraid of much in this world, but I don't go in thar' ag'in till day-break, you bet!"

"Why, Bill, you're a coward."

"I kin eat the man that says it, ef you'll only cut off his ears an' grease his head," Bill replied, stoutly. "Sides, thar' ain't any chears in thar'; I reckon you think that you're in New York or 'Frisco, a callin' fur chears so hand."

"Perhaps there's a box round the entry somewhere?" Rennet suggested.

"I seed one a while ago, under the stairs Bill, after thinking for a moment.

Rennet took the candle, found the box and brought it with him to his former sta-

tion. Then the two sat down upon it and kept vigilant watch, though, as Bill observed, "twain't much use to watch a dead man, 'cos he wouldn't run away, nohow you could fix it."

Rennet did not take the trouble to inform the stage-driver that he was watching the living and the dead.

The express office was dimly lit by a half dozen candles, burning in the tin sconces attached to the walls.

The flickering light fell upon a half dozen stern and resolute faces. The Vigilante leaders were gathered in council. Judge Jones sat at his desk; the others were seated around him. The most prominent men in Spur City were represented there.

Quietly they had assembled at the Judge's summons, roused from their slumbers by the call of duty.

The Judge made a short speech, recounting the full particulars of the murder of Gains Tendall, to which the others listened attentively.

"And now, fellow-citizens," said the Judge, after completing his recital, "I think that the time for action is come, I think that the strong right arm of justice should be felt by the rogues that harbor in our midst; it is time that they be taught a lesson. The Vigilantes must rise, take a hand in the game, and wipe out these scoundrels. Spur City needs purifying, fellow-citizens, and upon us devolves that duty. We must let the desperados in our midst understand that we are terribly in earnest. No child's play now; no more black cloaths, masks, and bug-a-boo stuff. Such fellows as this Dick Talbot laugh at it. You see that he has never heeded our menace at all. In fact, he has only put himself by remaining. We don't want talk now, but work—short, sharp and decisive." Then the Judge sat down.

"But is there any reason, Judge, to connect Dick Talbot with this murder?" one of the citizens asked.

Brown briefly recounted how they had discovered the body of the road-agent, covered with wounds, behind the massive boulder.

"Bore the marks of a desperate fight, eh?" Jones said.

"I reckon he did," Brown replied; "he was reg'larly chawed up."

Jones guessed at the truth in an instant. He remembered what the ruffian, Joe Rain, had said in regard to Overland Kit. It was plain to him that Kit had tracked Rain, had attempted to punish him for his treachery, but had perished in the struggle.

"We kivered the body up with rocks so as to keep the wolves from it, Judge; but the critters had commenced on the face after we got there," Brown said.

"Well, I don't know if I jine in the funeral myself," the man-from-Red-Dog remarked, carelessly.

"Count me in, too," Brown said.

"And me; I go for order, every time!" Reed exclaimed; which remark, considering that the speaker had probably been in more "difficulties" than almost any other man in town, was something wonderful.

"We are going to arrest the criminal; and if there is any resistance made, the Vigilantes will probably take a hand in it," Jones said.

"Wal, I don't keer if I jine in the funeral myself," the man-from-

FATHER FOOTS THE BILL.

BY JOE JOT JR.

Let folks delight
In envious spite
So would I have them do;
I dress fine
I love to shine,
For the goods I buy
Such please my eye,
As please my eye,
And have the best, I will,
I do not care
How rich or rare,
For—father foots the bill!

When Tuesday comes
My kettle-drums
Are very hard to beat,
None of the best
Do I require,
Because it is beat.
Though poorer far
Than others are,
I strive to beat them still,
And very hard outdo,
For—father foots the bill!

A coach and four
Stands at my door
E'er ready at my call,
And glad and gay
I speed away
To opera or matinée
When I'm watching
The jeweled mine
Such rays my gems distil;
Others are laid
Far in the shade,
And, father foots the bill!

I almost worry,
I'm nearly sorry
To think of poor papa,
I'd rather not say
Both signs and day
A-drudging at the law,
And he avers
Times can't be worse,
They're hard enough to kill,
And says it takes
More than it makes
For him to foot the bill.

To think about,
That there are
These things are unto me,
We can't abide
The ways of Fate,
And so I let them be;
It is very drowsy
In golden room
To live for pleasure still,
On Fashion's throne
I sit alone,
And—father foots the bill.

LEAVES

From an Actor's Life;
OR,
Recollections of Plays and Players.

BY GEO. L. AIKEN.

I.—The Tremont Theater, Boston—The Rent Day—Douglas Jerrold—Mrs. George Barrett—102—H. J. Finn—The Property Man—The Secret Mine—Lifting a Super—A Practical Joke.

My recollection of a theater extends back to an early period of my existence. Indeed, my first remembrance is of a theater. I remember standing on the stage of the Tremont Theater in Boston, without any particular idea of what I was doing there, or how I got there, and gazing over the footlights at the sea of heads in the pit—this was before the *parquet* time, and the pit was the favorite resort of the men and boys—with a feeling of awe that made my backbone quiver irresistibly.

This was probably a slight touch of what is called "stage fright," but I never experienced it to any particular degree of inconvenience. I have heard the experience of several who have undergone this infliction, and it was vivid. I was inoculated in the drama at too early an age, I suppose, to catch this fever of awe that made my backbone quiver irresistibly.

My instructions were to hold up my head and look at the actor who was in the play, my father; which instruction I followed with the precision of a raw recruit at a military drill.

The play, I remember, on this occasion, was the "Rent Day," which, as I afterward discovered, is an excellent domestic drama, by the celebrated Douglas Jerrold.

He was alive then; he is dead now.

The last scene of the play had a feature in it that was peculiarly attractive to my youthful mind. It is where the bailiffs, in the act of "distraining for rent," seize upon the furniture, an old stuffed arm-chair—which had served for a seat for no end of generations of hard-working, honest farmers—being the particular object of their aggression.

A struggle always took place over the chair and one arm was broken, and from the fracture a stream of silver coins poured out upon the stage, rattling down with a merry jingle.

This was the dead grandfather's money, that nobody could ever discover, though it was suspected that he had hidden it away somewhere.

This discovery made everybody happy, and the bailiffs were hustled off the stage with scant ceremony. A fair-haired woman, with a voice that was as sweet as any music I ever heard, made a frantic rush for me, caught me in her arms and kissed me—a proceeding that used to frighten me at first, but I got used to it in time. Indeed, the older I grew the less this sort of thing frightened me!

This lady, as I learned afterward, was Mrs. George Barrett, unquestionably one of the best actresses the American stage has ever presented to the public.

I was supposed to be her infant son on that occasion. A score of years after, on the stage of another theater in that same city, I enacted Eugene De Lorme to her Margaret Elmire in the play of "Love's Sacrifice," and though she was verging upon sixty years of age, she could still present youthful appearance behind the footlights, and the wonderful music of her sweet voice was unimpaired.

Whenever there were children required in the plays, I was always brought into requisition. My home then was in a large, old-fashioned house in Cook's Court—now Chapman Place—which was in the rear of the theater building, and I remember being awakened one night from a sound slumber, dressed hastily, and taken to the theater to personate the "curly-headed urchin" in a drama called "One Hundred and Two; or, the Veteran and his Progeny." This was a favorite afterpiece in those days, and the Veteran was personated by an actor named Finn, who was considered to be an excellent performer.

Some accident had rendered a change of the afterpiece necessary, and hence the unexpected call for me. Mr. Finn was a genial gentleman, and was very affable to me. Indeed, he appeared to be quite fond of the "curly-headed urchin"—my hair does not curl as much, nor is there as much of it, now, as there was then.

My recollection of this talented actor is very faint, as he died in my boyhood; but I had the pleasure of knowing two of his sons afterward, both of whom appeared to have inherited a liberal share of their father's talent. One of them, who bore the same name as his father,

H. J. Finn, acquired quite a reputation as a newspaper writer of popular literature.

Of course I had the free run of the theater, and with the investigating spirit of youth, I invaded all parts of it. But the property room was my chief attraction, and as I found favor in the eyes of the property man (his name was George Wall), I was permitted to visit it whenever my inclination prompted.

It was a wonder to me. The various and strange articles which were used in the different plays, and which are called "Properties"—it would puzzle an antiquarian to tell how the word first originated—were hung up, or scattered about, in the most delightful confusion.

There were shields, helmets, spears, battle-axes, swords, guns, pistols, daggers, and all the paraphernalia of war. Throne-chairs, banners, palanquins, sedan-chairs, and canopies. Goblets and vases made of pasteboard, and covered with "Dutch metal" to represent gold and silver. Fruit-baskets, with imitation fruit that looked so real that I had to test it with fingers and teeth to satisfy myself that it was not so; I experienced a feeling of disappointment in the detection of the counterfeit. There were also imitation chickens, and pies, and loaves of bread, constructed with the same artistic skill. Bags marked "Gold" and filled with round pieces of tin and bits of broken crockery, as I discovered in a surreptitious manner. There were also long purses filled with glittering pieces of brass, that shone through the net-work in an enticing way. There were torches, that held a piece of sponge saturated with alcohol, lanterns, clubs of all sorts, masks of all kinds of faces, demon's heads and fairy wands.

But I could not begin to enumerate all the articles this wonderful room contained. It was a perfect curiosity-shop to me, and I was never tired of watching Mr. Wall while he constructed these wonderful articles. He was a genius in his way. I remember him as a jolly, fat, little man, always in good humor.

He was very fond of a practical joke, and the supernumeraries were the objects upon whom he experimented, and he never missed a good opportunity.

I remember, one night, when the play was one of those old melodramas that are so seldom represented at the present time: "The

Strangely enough, Mr. Wall was killed by an explosion of fireworks at Lanigan and San-derson's factory in East Cambridge; but I hardly think that it could be considered as a retribution upon him for his practical joke upon the poor super.

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This race is always lovely, beauty appearing to be its distinctive type. Its members are as characteristic in their traits that separate them from the Cubans of Spanish descent, or the mixed races of Indian and negro, as the Hebrews are from other nations.

No one knows the origin of this race; but they are supposed to be descendants of the people who dwelt upon this island when Columbus first visited it.

It was upon a girl of this race that Hank Dockhorn gazed, as he sat under the palm tree, and fanned himself with his broad brimmed hat, sat and gazed in open-eyed wonder.

He could hardly realize the situation. A short time previously he had lain, bound hand

he must die, he was conscious that, if he had his choice in the matter, he would much rather prefer to live.

The night's gloom fell oppressively upon Hank's spirits. That darkness would be dispelled by the sun's bright rays, and then would come another darkness—death's eternal night.

There was another light to come before the sun. The tropical moon arose in all its splendor; and only those who have seen the moon rise over Cuba's fair island can form any idea of the loveliness that her silver radiance imparts to the night.

A little aperture, about two feet square, in the side of the hut, served for a window, and through this the moon sent a stream of mellow light.

Hank Dockhorn lay and gazed upon it. The light exerted a soothing influence upon his oppressed spirit, but, suddenly, something without seemed to close the aperture.

"Hist! Are you there?"

This question was asked with a strong Spanish accent, as if the speaker was not very familiar with English.

"Yes, I'm here, and I'm likely to stay here," answered Hank, with a grim facetiousness, which his critical situation could not suppress.

"Hush! I get you out—door locked—window do."

The next moment Hank saw a girl climbing through the window. He knew by her voice that she was of the softer sex, but he had no idea whether she was white, red, black or brown, for females of all those colors are to be found in Cuba.

Therefore, when she glided noiselessly through the window, and stood beside him, and the band of moonlight disclosed her form and features, a cry of astonishment burst from his lips.

"My eyes!" he exclaimed, "but you are a beauty!"

"Hush!" she cautioned him. "Soldier at door—do sleep—do not wake him."

She took a keen-bladed knife from her girdle, knelt down and cut the ropes that bound the prisoner's arms and legs.

Hank arose to his feet and stretched his limbs with a great sense of relief, when the girl said, in a whisper: "Now fly," pointing significantly to the window.

"Through there?" he questioned, dubiously,

across brawling little streams, and through tangled vines, waving in fantastic festoons from the trunks and branches of tall trees.

And the rising sun still found them moving on; but when they reached that lovely glade in the forest she paused.

"Rest," she said. "You are out of danger here."

"I'm glad to hear you say so," he cried, as he removed his felt hat, and glanced admiringly at the girl as he did so. If he had thought her pretty by moonlight, he found that prettiness much enhanced by sunlight.

"Well, the sun has been up this hour, and I'm alive to see it," he continued. "Thanks to you, my dark-eyed, dark skinned beauty. You'll never want a friend while Hank Dockhorn lives. And if you don't know what his friend amounts to, ask any of the boys in the Sixth Ward, in New York, and they can tell you. Bless your dear heart, I feel as if I could take you in my arms and hug you for it."

And, suiting the action to the word, he clasped the girl in his arms, and kissed her with great ardor.

Taken utterly by surprise, the girl uttered a shrill cry, but the cry was scarcely one of alarm.

"Halt there!" exclaimed a voice in the distance.

Hank released the girl, as he saw a young man, in the characteristic dress of the Cuban planter, advancing through the grove, and swinging a light cane in his hand.

He came rapidly up to them.

"What, Hank! making love already?" he continued. "Are you going to take him for your sweetheart, Carmela?"

Hank stared in astonishment at the new comer.

"What, Senor Amado?" he cried, in surprise.

"Faith, even I!" answered Amado, as he shook him warmly by the hand. "Does that surprise you? I was in Mayari, on business, when you were brought in a captive. I saw you though you did not see me. I dared not interfere in your behalf for fear of bringing suspicion upon myself, but I determined to save you, if I could. Carmela, who knew every foot of the country around here, undertook the task. I knew she had all woman's skill, and more than a man's courage. She promised to bring you to me, and here you are. Thus I repay you for your kindness to a poor exile in New York. The death of an uncle has made me the proprietor of a rich sugar-plantation. It is near at hand. Come, you shall be my guest as long as you like, and then you can rejoin the patriots, or I will get you a passage to New York, if you prefer it."

"I do decidedly. I've had enough of glory. I've had a narrow escape. I may not be so lucky the next time," replied Hank. "There may not be another Carmela handy."

Hank Dockhorn enjoyed the hospitality of his friend, Louis Amado, for six months, and then he returned to New York to act as his agent in the sugar business.

But he took a wife with him when he went, and that wife was Carmela.

Beat Time's Notes.

A JEWELER who sold me a watch and warranted to give me good time, six years ago, says I misunderstood him, he guesses; he didn't intend the account to run as long as the watch.

The hoe is one of the handiest things ever invented for hanging up on the fence. The handle is long and one of the very easiest things to let go of. How delightful it is to take the hoe out into the garden on a warm day and lay it down! What words of pure content does it bring to a man when it is lost! How pleasant it is to look at it in its idle moments! Take the hoe all in all, simple little implement that it is, I think it is one of the most useful things in the world to have nothing to do with.

I NEVER knew until lately how far the practice of fraud could be carried. At our boarding-house they use artificial butter with jute in it to represent real hair—the most disgraceful imposition a constant boarder ever had to bear. Then they have got to putting artificial dyes in the syrup in hopes that we will think them natural ones and feel happy. When they got down to putting imitation roaches in the biscuits, I saw I was being made a dupe of and left—my bad. I'd like to know what this world is coming to when they impose on a man in these ways.

I LOVE to sit down quietly and meditate (when I have got a good deal of work to do) upon the past, and as the old bygone days come tramping up, each with valise packed, full of memories, every one which I look into is filled more or less with pumpkin pies. Oh, the pumpkin pies of my boyhood! how large they look to my sight, even from this distance! How I again see them arranged, row upon row, on the pantry shelves. No matter how high up, they were never sour to me, for I could get a pumpkin pie as easily as I could get a whipping. I used to get the whipping for dessert. My gentle mother could always tell where the last pie missing went to by the outside layer on my boyhood's face; then she would layer it over my back, but I never could find an antidote for pumpkin pies. They are the sweetest memories of the past. Oh, that I had a shelf full now, so I might turn one of them upside down and upon it inscribe an ode that would bring ten dollars a line, with the pie thrown in.

My wife's grandfather was one of the greatest conversationalists of the age. He talked all the time; talked in his sleep; never could go to church, because he couldn't keep still; his tongue couldn't have kept still even if he had laid a brick on it. His wife used to put a plaster over his mouth to keep him quiet, but he'd talk it off in two minutes. He could talk a crowd out of a room inside of three minutes, and then follow them out talking, and talk them out of sight. He talked about everything, as well about what he didn't know as about what he did. It was pleasing to see him go into the weekly editor's office, and talk to him about the pyramids, history of Rome and the art of cutting leaders out of exchanges so as to make them look like original. It always pleased the editor mightily to hear him—going down stairs; and if he slipped on the stairs he never stopped talking as he rolled down. If he could find no one else to talk to he always talked to himself. When a life-insurance man or a book-agent dropped in upon him they would be seen tearing out of there in an hour or two, perfectly demoralized, without having even stated the nature of their business. He was considered a master of the language. He finally talked himself to death—the first accident of this kind that ever happened. He was my wife's grandfather, and nothing more need be said. She inherits his virtues.



He clasped the girl in his arms, and kissed her with great ardor.

Secret Mine," it was called, and it ended in a terrific explosion by which the mine is destroyed. I was dressed in Hindoo costume, and was supposed to be one of a persecuted tribe who dwelt in the mine.

Mr. Wall had to arrange this explosion, and apply the match at the proper time, and a crowd of warriors, women and children rushed from the mine after the explosion, and a grand combat took place among the ruins.

There was a tall supernumerary among the warriors, a young fellow from some country town, who had come to Boston to gratify his desire to become an actor, and he commenced, with the title of the modern Robin Hood.

Garcia led his band against the village of Mayari, surprised the Spanish garrison there, and put it to flight. The victorious patriots loaded themselves with arms and provisions to carry to their mountain retreat.

As they were leaving the village, heavily laden, they were suddenly attacked by a force of nearly two hundred volunteers, commanded by Colonel Andrew.

Several of the patriots fell at the first fire, their comrades dropped their booty and closed with the foe.

For a time the machete did good work, but the patriots were obliged to abandon the field before the superior number of their opponents.

Hank was cut off from the main body, and surrounded